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ABSTRACT

In view of recent Australian government policy favoring multiculturalism, a research study was undertaken to investigate the effect of literacy, bilingualism, and adult education and training on non-English speaking background (NESB) women in Australian society. NESB women have been identified as a migrant group with both special needs and problems as well as skills. This report reviews issues in literacy and bilingualism, new orientations in the 1990s for adult education and training, and workforce reform. The aim of the study was to enhance the opportunities for and access to further education and/or paid employment for NESB women. The methodology included a review of published and unpublished materials, interviews with a wide range of service providers and students, surveys of training opportunities, attendance at conferences and workshops, observations of a range of classes, collaboration on a literacy and basic education workshop, and development of a network of skilled informants. It is concluded that: (1) location, functioning, needs, and problems of NESB women as a specific group in Australia must continue to be the focus of research; and (2) matters of restructuring have profound implications for literacy, language, basic education and other forms of education and skills training for those in and out of the workforce. Eleven tables and figures on labor force participation rates, unemployment rates, and migration category supplement the narrative. Appended is information on the project outline, questionnaire, interview schedule, letters and survey sheets for government and community organizations, meeting agenda, and recommendations for a model for action. (LB) Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education.

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LITERACY NEEDS OF NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUND WOMEN

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1991

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Report of a Research Project

Dr Lois Foster and Dr Marta Rado

School of Education
La Trobe University

This Project was supported by a grant from the Division of Further Education, Ministry of Education and Training, Victoria

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FOREWORD

The researchers wish to acknowledge the support given to enable this project to be carried out. First, the grant provided by the Division of Further Education, Ministry of Education, Victoria, was essential but, in addition, very many DFE staff gave generously of their time and expertise. Our special thanks go to David Goldsworthy and Chris Stewart. Second, the project could not have been completed without the assistance of the organizers and teachers in adult literacy and basic education settings and classes. Their contribution was outstanding. To all our other interviewees including staff of TAFE, AMES, CAE, various centres, Neighbourhood Houses, Community Health Services, tertiary institutions, Workcare, DILGEA, SkillShare, State Training Board, libraries, the Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council, employers, union representatives, ethnic community workers, we are indebted for their contribution and interest. We have been privileged to interact with many students in various kinds of learning situations. We are grateful for their co-operation in the Project and applaud their endeavours, often in the face of considerable difficulty, to further their literacy and basic education. We received research assistance from Eva Burman and Ruth Arber, typing and wordprocessing help from Jeni Barclay, Yvonne Puttyfoot and Marilyn Smith and computing consultation from Di Worrell. To all of these helpers, we offer sincere thanks. Finally, we are grateful to LaTrobe University and the School of Education in particular for providing various kinds of resources and support for the Project.

Lois Foster

Marta Rado

Melbourne
January 1991

ACRONYMS

AACLAME	Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education
AATE	Australian Association of Teachers of English
ABEC	Adult Basic Education Certificate
ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
AEMP	Advanced English for Migrants Program
AEP	Advanced English Program
ALAA	Applied Linguistics Association of Australia
ALBE	Adult Literacy Basic Education
ALT	Adult Literacy Program
AMEP	Adult Migrant Education Program
ANESBW	Association of Non-English Speaking Background Women
ARA	Australian Reading Association
ASLLP	Australian Second Language Learning Project
ATS	Australian Traineeship System
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
CAE	Council of Adult Education
CEP	Commonwealth Employment Program
CES	Commonwealth Employment Service
CLLS	Community Literacy and Language Services
DEET	Department of Employment, Education and Training
DFE	Division of Further Education
DIEA	Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs
DILGEA	Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs
DIR	Department of Industrial Relations
DSS	Department of Social Security
EMC	Ecumenical Migration Centre
ESB	English speaking background
ESL	English as a second language
EWP	English in the workplace
FKA	Free Kindergarten Association
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
ILY	International Literacy Year
JT	Jobtrain
LACs	Local Advisory Committees
LATA	Commonwealth Labour Adjustment Arrangements
LOTE	Language other than English
MACFE	Ministerial Advisory Committee on Further Education
MACSP	Multicultural and Cross-cultural Supplementation Program
NALP	National Aborigines Languages Program

NCELTR	National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research
NESB	Non-English speaking background
NGAEP	Non-Government Adult Education Program
NLIA	National Language Institute of Australia
NOOSR	National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition
OSTB	Office of the State Training Board
PSC	Public Service Commission
RCFEs	Regional Councils of Further Education
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SS	SkillShare
STB	State Training Board
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TCF	Textiles, Clothing and Footwear
VCAB	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VOAELP	Vocationally Oriented Adult Education and Literacy Program

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Division of Further Education, Victoria

Take action to:

1. target a percentage of DFE funding for the provision of literacy programs for NESB women;

2. within this percentage target funds specifically for bilingual learning;

3. provide resources for the use of the dominant community languages in Victoria in any community awareness and information strategy in the form of brochures and other non-print means of communicating with NESB adult literacy learners;

4. develop state-wide a coherent professional development strategy for full-time and part-time teachers, teacher aides, untrained literacy workers, bilingual workers, home tutors and other volunteers to promote good practice in ESL literacy teaching;

5. develop the mechanisms for generating appropriate literacy materials, particularly for NESB women, which are culturally appropriate;

6. work with other government bodies and other agencies servicing NESB women such as CES and Workcare to develop a comprehensive course referral and multilingual information service. Each DFE region should develop a strategy for identifying and liaising with relevant government agencies;

7. liaise with State Training Board to ensure that resources are provided for literacy pilot programs for outworker women;

8. support the inclusion of bilingual ESL and LOTE literacy in the already existing regional processes for the development of course planning, teaching methodology and information dissemination; and

9. ensure that the Adult Basic Education Research and Curriculum Forum covers a sufficiently wide range of topics including bilingual education and reaches researchers as well as full-time and part-time staff of mainstream, workplace and

ethnic/community-based providers so that the effective implementation of curriculum options can occur.

Promote:

10. the extension of the already existing TAS co-ordinating Committee to include DFE, OSTB, AMES, CAE, the Schools, the Ethnic Affairs Commission and ethnic and other community organisations;

11. outreach referral and counselling services for NESB women. These services should employ appropriately qualified and experienced staff, possibly bilingual in order to create favourable conditions and attitudes for NESB women learners; and

12. ongoing development of approaches to both formal accreditation and credit portability appropriate for further education programs and the recognition of prior learning in these credentialling processes.

Explore:

13. the use of new technology where the knowledge of literacy teaching is combined with new developments in computer controlled technology with a view of deploying such facilities more widely. In particular investigate the ways organisations which have new technological equipment can share their facilities with providers of NESB adult literacy classes; and

14. with other agencies the possibility of providing financial incentives for NESB women, who are outworkers, part-time employed or retrainees to attend literacy classes.

Encourage:

15. all providers to publish a clear description of aims, objectives and selection criteria of adult ESL and LOTE literacy programs and the method of student selection in order for potential students to find a learning pathway; and

16. as a matter of policy the use of plain English in places of employment and Commonwealth and State Government notices, forms and other documents directed at the general public.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Study in Context

A recent and influential official report reviewing the settlement of migrants in Australia (Jupp, 1986) suggested that the strength of the nation lies in the creation of a society in which the skills, talents and abilities of these people are utilised to the full. Many other reports have identified women of non-English speaking background (NESB) as a (migrant) group with both special needs and problems as well as skills, talents and abilities. Unless these needs and problems are recognized and met, however, then it is unlikely that NESB women can actualise their potential to their own satisfaction or fulfil the requirements of Australian society. It was our concern that one set of skills in particular, literacy and basic education, were underdeveloped among significant numbers of NESB women that led to the project on literacy needs of NESB women.

The focus of the project brings together a set of interdependent themes - **literacy, bilingualism, women** (and more particularly women of non-English speaking background, born overseas and in Australia of NESB parents), and **adult education and training**. The impact of these elements is to be found in the life experiences different women have in Australian society, and in public issues receiving considerable attention in the media and in government policy-making arenas. Our project aimed to gain some insight into this complex interrelation. That these elements have become particularly salient in 1990 should be described at the outset.

The Hawke Government, after a period of ambivalence, has come out strongly in favour of multiculturalism as the most appropriate policy for Australia. As well, the Prime Minister, at the recent National Immigration Outlook Conference, 14-16 November 1990 in Melbourne, announced publicly that he is a supporter of a 'high level' of immigration. These are indicators that the current diversity of Australia's population is to be maintained, and even enhanced. For example, the Prime Minister has summed up the approach to multiculturalism in the 90s this way (OMA, 1989(a):1)

> Multiculturalism is based on three elements. They are respect for cultural difference, promotion of social justice, and economic efficiency. In Australia's current situation we cannot afford to ignore the potential contribution of any of our human resources.

Whatever our attitudes to this representation, the reality is that Australia is a society in which people of different ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds live together. Multicultural policies aim to reinforce the social fabric by encouraging all Australians to recognize and accept the cultural diversity that is a product of Australia's non-discriminatory immigration policy. Such policies also aim to achieve social justice. This entails full and equitable access for all Australians to available programs and services, without disadvantage because of ethnic, linguistic or religious backgrounds. The exploitation of all human resources is a critical aspect of Australia's economic restructuring.

A recent Federal Government report prepared by the Working Party on post-secondary English language training (DILGEA, 1990) suggested that all governments in Australia in the post-war period have recognized the need to supplement the domestic skills base with skills brought in from overseas, if Australia is to be competitive internationally. Language is a critical factor in using the skills of those migrants who come from non-English speaking backgrounds. The Report concludes that there has been inadequate English language training, and hence Australia has been unable to take full advantage of the great inflow of skills which migrants have brought with them. Whilst many point to the costs of the immigration program, the report emphasises the greater cost of under-provision and under-utilization of skills. Australia's programs up to this time have not had the capacity to deal with the level of unmet English language need. The Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP), a major provider of English language training, now focuses on the needs of recently arrived migrants. There is a large backlog of longer term residents with language difficulties. Because of the male bias in the division of labour in Australia, women are likely to be more disadvantaged at any stage with respect to language training needs and skills training than men.

Women have become targeted in government legislation and policy as a group worthy of particular attention. For example, the Hawke Government has adopted The Objectives of the National Agenda for Women for the Year 2000 (Office of the Status of Women, 1990:1). In part, the Agenda stated that:

> The Government is committed to ensuring that its policies and programs operate to improve the status of women by providing economic security and independence, freedom from discrimination and equality of opportunity in all spheres of activity. It is committed to ensuring that women's needs are taken fully into account in the development and administration of Government policies and programs. Women must have a choice, a say and a fair go and they must have these things regardless of their culture, language, age or family circumstances.

The practical implications of such a manifesto are extensive. For example, with respect to ensuring that women have choice, the Agenda noted that the following conditions would have to be satisfied:

> . . . access to employment through education, training, retraining, affirmative action and other employment programs with a view to diversifying employment opportunities of women, including access to newly emerging occupation; and
>
> . . . progress towards reducing the earning gap between male and female workers and to promote conditions which allow the combination of workforce and family responsibilities.

A renewed emphasis on **adult education** and particular kinds of **training** has resulted already in changes to the structure of post-secondary and higher education aimed at achieving transfer of credits, increasing the clientele, and diminishing the pool of unskilled and under-skilled adults in the society.

To extend these conditions to NESB women may be somewhat problematic. These women may be inhibited by inadequate competence in English and in literacy. One can only speculate on whether enough is being done to enable women to be prepared for access to all those education and work opportunities mentioned in the above excerpt. This concern is reflected in a policy options paper commissioned by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and published in 1989 (p.37). The paper concluded:

> The most striking conclusion that can be made from the research on women from NESBs is that throughout their history in Australia they have been invisible. Their unique social experiences have been ignored and undervalued under the weight of general considerations about immigration, multiculturalism and gender. In recent years there has been a growing realisation that some of the issues and needs of women from NESBs need specific attention...Once women from NESBs become visible then other barriers to their effective participation in Australian society will begin to break down.

This paper had specific recommendations to make on how to make **NESB women** and their **needs** more visible and, hence, to acknowledge them in policy formation. With respect to training and retraining, the paper (p.43) recommended that issues and strategies pertinent to NESB women be reviewed, that overt encouragement of NESB women was needed to facilitate their participation, that education, training and retraining programs sponsored by Government agencies should be language, culture and gender inclusive, and that government departments should develop, adopt, implement and monitor a policy position on women from NESB.

Greater recognition of the role of language(s) and problems of lack of competence in languages has come with the acceptance of a National Policy on Languages, but even here we cannot be too complacent.

Concern that rhetoric and even official policies may outrun programs and their implementation was voiced by the joint conference of the Australian Linguistics Society and the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia held at Monash University in September 1989 (ALAA Newsletter, 1989:10). Of the National Policy on Languages, the conference expressed concern that there is no guaranteed continuation of funding after 1990 for the important programs of the National Policy: The Australian Second Language Learning Program (ASLLP), the National Aboriginal Languages Program (NALP) and the Multicultural and Cross-cultural Supplementation Program (MACSP). Arrangements for **Adult Literacy** are also unclear.

In the light of the heightened salience of education and training, including **literacy**, for adults and especially NESB women in Australia at a time when a sharpened economic focus is impacting on many kinds of government policy, the aim of the study being reported here is to enhance the understanding of, the opportunities for, and access to, further education and/or paid employment for NESB women. **Work** is one crucial way by which individuals contribute to and benefit from any society. It is central to the development of self-identity and plays an important role for those whose ethnic identity may be challenged as a consequence of their migration to, or location by reason of birth into, another culture. If there are barriers to participation in education and work, then the capacity of the individual to achieve his/her potential is severely limited. The social costs of the particular skills are manifest in a range of areas including citizenship and social life, family life, health, consumer rights, and labour force participation and status. If we add to this the judgement of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training (1989:xi) that:

> perhaps more than any other issue, award restructuring illustrates the domestic and international challenges facing Australia in the final decade of this century,

then it is not surprising that our research has quickly led us to consider **award restructuring** as a crucial concept in unpacking the complex relationship between literacy, training, and access to and participation in education and work for NESB women in Australian society.

Although, in times of economic hardship, the anti-immigration lobby becomes more vociferous, there appears to be only a limited reduction in migrant numbers. The Government's approach has been to emphasise the economic benefits migrants bring to Australia. This has inevitably heightened the nexus between education, training and work, and restructuring.

The Federal Government's position on the relation between multiculturalism and immigration policy is made quite clear in the following extract (Advisory Council or Multicultural Affairs, 1988:3).

> . . . it is important to understand that multicultural policy is quite separate to immigration policy. Immigration policy determines the manner in which we select future Australians. Multicultural policy addresses the way Australians live together . . . multiculturalism should be seen as or complementary to domestic policy.

Immigration policy must reflect Australia's national interests, based upon economic, social and humanitarian considerations. It should be perceived as primary. Multicultural policy, therefore, should be viewed as complementary and, as well as having an existence independent of immigration. Under each of these policies, the issues for women may not be the same as for men; neither are considerations of English speaking background and non-English speaking background Australians likely to coincide.

Issues in Literacy and Bilingualism in Australia

Having sketched in the general context, we must turn now to an overview of literacy and the nature of problems concerning literacy for NESB Australians.

Issue 9, 1990 of the journal ***Education Australia*** was devoted to literacy. The editorial noted that 1 February 1990 saw the national launch of International Literacy Year (ILY), sponsored by the United Nations, in Canberra. The editor suggested that there might be some concern that literacy is just another of a series of Years focussing on special causes like Women or the Disabled. Although the results of the Year have yet to be evaluated, and may in any case be difficult to establish precisely, that Literacy has been targeted is itself a significant event. The declaration of the Year of Literacy has brought into high profile the economic, social and emotional costs of low literacy skills just as it has brought also the opportunity to deepen public awareness about literacy and its full meaning. The findings of the first national survey on adult literacy in Australia had preceded the declaration of the special Year. The Report entitled ***No Single Measure*** by Rosie Wickert was released in November 1989. According to Wickert (p.6), this Report revealed considerable deficiencies in literacy among adult Australians. These findings attracted much attention and has helped to create a more productive and relevant context for discussing the issue of low levels of literacy and numeracy among adults in Australia.

Wickert was mentioned in the Education Australia Journal noted above. Her article entitled 'Women of Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) and Mainstream Participation - Future Directions', recounted an interview with members for the Association of Non-English Speaking Background Women of Australia (ANESBWA) - who commented that:

> For some NESB women, basic English skills are insufficient even though many have substantial qualifications and work experiences from their countries of origin . . . [There] is a major issue facing older women whose children, their defacto interpreters, have left home and are not able to fulfil that function any more . . . . [This leads to] the **marginalisation** of NESB women. [emphasis added](p.14)

The excerpt identifies among others the controversial issue of the State's responsibility towards the language needs of older NESB women.

Increased emphasis on literacy had already emerged as a public issue prior to the ILY. For example, in June 1989, during the First National Conference of the Australian Association of Teachers of English (AATE) and the Australian Reading Association (ARA), the Darwin Symposium on Literacy was established and concluded that there need be NO LIMITS TO LITERACY. This became the title of the report produced by the Symposium (1989). This report wrestled with a definition of literacy. It suggested that:

> Literacy is a relative concept which encompasses a range of reading and writing skills. Literacy involves the integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking; it incorporates numeracy. It includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognize and use language appropriate to different social situations. For an advanced technological society such as Australia, our goal must be an active literacy which allows people to use language to enhance their capacity to think, create and question, which helps them to participate more effectively in society. (p.2)

This broad definition of literacy suggests why many longtime NESB residents of Australia, who have apparently coped with the adjustment to an English-speaking society, have been able neither to gain their full share of society's rewards nor contribute as fully as they might wish.

The Darwin Conference noted also the complexity of literacy. The Draft Report (1989:2-3) identified a host of literacies, for example, basic literacy, functional literacy, secondary literacy, computer literacy, technological literacy, social literacy, scribal literacy, lay literacy, Moslem literacy, clerical literacy, epistemic literacy, informational literacy, performative literacy, high grade literacy and political literacy. It also identified the major issues relating to literacy in Australia as comprising:

* Principles, entitlements, responsibilities;
* Equity and access, and inhibitors to access;
* Changing societal demands;
* Literacy for adults and the workplace;
* Assessment and evaluation; and
* Public Relations.

It is important to remember that what has been termed **functional illiteracy** is found amongst both English speaking and non-English speaking residents of Australia to a significant degree (D'Cruz, 1989). D'Cruz includes, in the notion of literacy, both language and numeracy dimensions and refers to programs to promote these skills among adults as basic education. Among those singled out as requiring special attention in basic education are people of non-English speaking background. This is particularly so in a culture such as Australia:

> With the pronounced, ethnically partisan Anglo character of modern Australian public life, literacy in English as well as numeracy are skills necessary, at a minimum, for wider communication among the multiplicity of peoples with diverse ethnic backgrounds and for effective participation in the Australian public culture (p.8)

The contribution literacy and mathematical skills make to the economic, social and political fabric of society as well as the personal value of basic communication skills to adults for purposes, such as taking advantage of career pathways opening up through award restructuring, are much in the news. On the other hand, the realisation has been growing in recent years that literacy levels in Australia are inadequate to sustain long-term development in Australian society.

Any assessment of the **social costs of inadequate literacy development** must be based on current definitions of literacy which emphasise the relationship between literacy and personal autonomy **and** the social-cultural context of language. A review by Hartley (1989) of this issue takes a broad view of the complex notion of 'social cost' in order to incorporate both social and personal perspectives. It is seen as any consequence which limits, restricts or negatively affects an individual's participation in society as well as any consequence which has implications for society as a whole.

Hartley identified the following social costs and discusses their significant consequences:

(i) Citizenship and social life: inadequate literacy skills restrict the ability of individuals to exercise informed citizenship, participate in their local communities and use their abilities and talents. Low levels of literacy shut people out from important areas of human experience and thought, tend to make them dependent rather than independent, reduce confidence, and may contribute to keeping them in poverty;

(ii) Families: reliance on others as a result of inadequate literacy skills may be detrimental to the development of autonomous, competent and confident individuals. In some families, the pattern of parents' inadequate literacy skills may be repeated with children, perpetuating disadvantage and social costs;

(iii) Health: people have restricted access to general preventive health information. Stresses brought about by low levels of literacy may also contribute to ill-health;

(iv) Consumer rights: are severely at risk for those with inadequate literacy skills. They may be excluded, misled, cheated and suffer the skills and lack of confidence to seek redress;

(v) Official language: contributes to the problem of inadequate literacy skills and to people's powerlessness;

(vi) Labour force: inadequate literacy skills in the labour force diminish the potential for economic growth, affect the flexibility and efficiency of industry, restrict personal advancement and ability to transfer across jobs, decrease initial and later employability and increase the potential for industrial accidents and occupational health and safety problems;

(vii) Crime: For some individuals, lack of literacy skills is part of a complex of factors which leads to crime; and

(viii) Social Welfare: in some individuals, inadequate level of literacy may lead to individuals becoming social welfare recipients and their sense of personal failure may be exacerbated because bureaucracies expect certain levels of competence which some cannot fulfil. (pp.ix-xii)

Thus, the importance of literacy on a **social** as well as a **personal** basis would seem to be unchallenged. Evidence of union and government support for this position is given below.

The peak union body, the **ACTU**, links **literacy** and **reform** and **safety** in the workplace. For example, in ***The Age*** of 6 December 1990 on p.17, the headline read 'Literacy key to reform and safety: ACTU' and the article commenced:

> The success of micro-economic reform and award restructuring is dependent upon the development of adequate literacy and English-language training courses for all workers, according to an ACTU submission to a parliamentary committee on literacy. The ACTU estimates that more than one million Australian workers are in need of some extra literacy and English language training. Deficiencies in language skills are estimated to cost Australian industry $6.5 billion a year in lost production. Between $10 million and $13 million of the annual workers' compensation bill is believed to be directly attributed to injuries caused by poor English.

These sentiments echo the publicity for the Conference entitled 'Language is Good Business: The role of language in Australia's economic future'. The conference, hosted by the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education (ACCLAME), was held in Canberra in October 1990. The publicity brochure stated that over 1 million Australians have serious literacy and numeracy difficulties, well over half a million Australians speak little or no English, and very

few senior business people in Australia who deal with overseas partners speak a language other than English. ACCLAME is, of course, concerned to identify **English language problems** for NESB settlers but also its charter is to promote the **value of bilingualism**.

The **Federal Government**, in a number of portfolios, has sought to increase English language competence and levels of literacy. For example, in July 1989, the Federal Government announced improved English language training services for migrants. This referred to a new three year plan for the Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP) (DILGEA, 1989). The aim was to increase the level of English at which the migrant could function, to ensure co-operation with other agencies so that language skills were recognized for employment purposes and provide additional measures to help those people, e.g., women with young children who have trouble attending classes. The new AMEP plan would give priority to migrants in their first few years in Australia. There would be co-ordination between the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (DILGEA) and the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) to ensure that people learning English through AMEP would have greater access to mainstream education and training. There would be a review of the English in the Workplace Program and funds for its extension, and additional funds for a TV series on 'The Language of Work' to be available on SBS (DILGEA News Release, 26 July 1989).

Also, the Commonwealth has provided funds to State TAFE institutions, under the Advanced English for Migrants Program (AEMP), to provide vocational English and literacy training. A (means tested) Living Allowance for ESL has been provided to course participants and some 1400 students per annum now participate in this Program. (These are in addition to ESL participants in the DILGEA Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP)). Further, under the new Training Guarantee legislation which took effect in 1990, structured English language tuition for staff will qualify as eligible training by employers who are required to spend the equivalent of one per cent (and 1.5 per cent from 1991–1992) of their payroll on approved formal training. In addition, the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) Workplace Reform Program has targeted migrants and NESB employees, through projects under the Work Change Assistance Scheme, which include research into specific training needs of NESB workers, development of training materials, and translation of award restructuring materials (OMA, 1990:25).

While this activity reflects positive attitudinal and structural changes in favour of increased support for **literacy** and **basic education training** and **programs**, there is no doubt that full implementation of these ideas suffers a number of handicaps. There is space here to identify only some of the constraints.

An article which seems to reflect some of the uncertainties about literacy and its recognition appeared in ***The Weekend Australian***, 22-23 September, 1990, and, interestingly, on the front page. The headline was Literacy classes for employees 'too costly'. It commenced:

> Despite this being the Year of Literacy, Western Australia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry has said it would prefer some employees remain illiterate if the alternative is to have some employers pay for them to learn to read and write . . . . The Chamber's education officer, Ms Anne Griffiths, said yesterday that some workers such as cleaners do not need literacy skills to do their jobs. She said many businesses were hurting and should not have to allocate extra funds for literacy programs, particularly when literacy had little to do with getting some tasks completed. She said she believed employers should promote skill programs directly related to jobs.

The Trades and Labour Council defended the importance of literacy skills in the workforce stating that cleaners had to be able to read the labels of substances they used in their work. The State Minister for Productivity made a defence based on the evidence that employers providing literacy classes had found that such classes resulted in higher productivity and staff morale. These benefits were seen to outweigh costs.

The second example is taken from an official report. A Report on the **Strategic Review of Commonwealth/State Literacy Expenditure**, commissioned by DEET, was published in April 1990. The extracts following were reported at the Conference of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy in October 1990. The researchers reported that current patterns of expenditure by the Commonwealth and the States and Territories showed that:

* expenditure levels are very uneven, within States and Territories, amongst the Commonwealth's various programs, and across the adult literacy system as a whole;

* consumption of resources is highly unequal, as between social and geographical groups;

* there is a need for a much improved co-ordination of expenditures, both within States and Territories, within the Commonwealth's overall effort, and nationally; and

* expenditures, which are currently nowhere near sufficient to meet demand and are grossly inadequate in relation to need, should be substantially increased.

In relation to **existing and desirable allocation of responsibilities** as between the Commonwealth and the State/Territories, they noted that:

* there is considerable variation as between States and Territories as to conceptions of the extent of responsibility for adult literacy provision;

* even the States and Territories which have a relatively large view of their responsibilities see these as limited to amelioration rather than achieving a really substantial reduction in adult literacy problems; and.

* the Commonwealth accepts major responsibility only in the case of newly arrived migrants and Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

In relation to the nature of **appropriate co-ordination** mechanisms between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories, there was a judgement that:

* the existence of a large number of providers of kinds of provision is potentially a very valuable aspect of adult literacy education; but that

* this potential is often suppressed by a lack of any shared sense of objectives and priorities and of an agreed division of labour.

In regard to the **degree and kind of integration of adult literacy provision with other education and training** including English language provision for migrants of non-English speaking background, among the recommendations were:

* English language provision for migrants should be seen as one of the several areas of endeavour within the broad field of adult basic education; and that

* English language provision for migrants should take its place within the overall co-ordination framework.

An appropriate role to be played by the **non-government sector** also received attention. The following points were noted:

* non-government provision is a very valuable feature of adult basic education;

* provision is at the moment poorly organized, poorly evaluated and poorly supported;

* non-government provision is also seriously deficient in including almost no workplace and/or industry based programs; and

* the major expansion of non-government provision should be in this area.

Finally, the **International Literacy Year Secretariat** itself had no illusions about problems in the delivery of literacy programs. The ILY Secretariat produced two discussion papers on ILY issues in 1989. The following information comes from these publications. Paper 1 (1989:4) comments that in Australia, the existence of universal schooling means that child literacy is usually achieved. The greatest problem is likely to be with **adults**. This is partly because the provision of adult literacy programs in Australia is a recent development, something that has occurred in the last

decade or so. These programs are only starting to cater for adults who, for some reason, did not achieve literacy skills when they were children. Some 17,000 Australians were enrolled in adult literacy programs in 1986. Second, it is thought, however, that current adult literacy programs are reaching only a small percentage of those Australians in need. It is known that while many migrants of non-English speaking background are meeting their English language needs through English as a Second Language program, a considerable number who have speaking fluency are now joining adult literacy programs with people of English speaking background. This is further evidence that needs for literacy training overall are not being satisfied.

In a second paper (No. 2, 1989:5), the authors emphasise the crucial significance of literacy in a modern post-industrial society and the difficulties of ensuring that all groups in the society have an equal opportunity to become literate in the dominant language.

> An effective and comprehensive labour market training strategy taking particular account of industry and award restructuring proposals cannot exist without on-going support from an adult and basic education program. Literacy provision needs to be linked to the Government's social justice goals of equity, equality, access and participation. For some families, a break in the poverty cycle will include the provision of basic learning opportunities for both the adults and the children in the family . . . .
>
> Literacy difficulties of the English speaking background adult population in Australia have been largely a hidden problem. Both social justice and economic development considerations demand that adult literacy needs are addressed. The general community needs to be more aware and supportive of people with literacy difficulties and the stigma attached to people with inadequate reading and writing skills must be removed. Adults need to understand that it is possible to develop reading and writing skills as adults.

Adult Education and Training: New Orientations in the 1990s

The confluence of the International Literacy Year and the heightened economic focus of immigration, multiculturalism and industrial relations policies has produced a climate in which adult education generally and adult education, literacy and training have become matters of national significance. As Edgar has noted in his 1988 report for Victorian education authorities entitled ***Focus on Adults: Towards a Productive Learning Culture***:

> Adult education is the nation's key to catching up with the post-industrial age. Unless we educate and retrain our adults, we simply increase the time lag in the false belief that a new generation can be educated to solve our economic problems.

This extract was quoted in ***Further Education***, a publication of the Division of Further Education, Victoria, August 1990 (p.1). The Edgar report provides an appraisal and re-interpretation of the concept of adult education generally, and also in relation to a society in which the needs of NESB adults in relation to the promotion of the 'clever society' are being taken into account to a degree not seen before in the period of large scale sponsored migration since World War Two. It is instructive to review some of the main findings of that report.

The Edgar report (pp.20-23) considered that the current definition of adult education continues the marginalisation of adult education, relegating it to activities described as those left over from formal (accredited) institutionalised education, based on outdated notions of the demand and need for adult education, undervaluing the real and potential contributions which adult education can make to the creation of a learning community and to the Government's twin objectives of economic and social development. Access, transition and preparatory courses were inadequately described in the categorisation of educational programs. Therefore, the panel for the report determined its own more comprehensive definitions. The characteristics of adult education were identified as: (I) part of lifelong learning with a close relationship to all sectors of education; (II) formal and non-formal adult education and vocational and non-vocational adult education are interdependent; (III) there is a close relationship between adult education, economic development and social justice; and (IV) that adult education, while the responsibility of the Education portfolio, is an important function in many of the government agencies and should be seen in that wider context.

The essence of adult education is that it is self motivated learning, selected when needed or when interest can be met by flexible learning programs that fit well with other life demands such as work and family obligations. There is a distinction, not a dichotomy, between education to meet economic development goals and education to meet individual and social development goals. At a personal level, the goal is to enhance one's understanding of and control over some aspect of the life environment. At the community level, it is to enhance the quality of community life and the capacity of adults to operate competently as citizens and as members of family and community groups. Personal and community development are crucial foundations for economic development, as well as 'goods' in their own right.

Adult education (Edgar, 1988:23-24) under this definition includes all programs which:

* open up access for adults who lack the accepted formal pre-requisites to return to study or retraining, i.e.
  - literacy, numeracy and other forms of basic education for adults whose initial education has not been adequate;
  - English as a second language for adults from other cultural backgrounds;

- preparatory, introductory and bridging programs to more formal courses of learning in schools, colleges and universities; and
- adult correspondence courses in secondary school subjects, including adult VCE.

* enhance individual, social and community development and the growth of an informed community, i.e.:
  - programs of marriage education, parent effectiveness, community health,
  - programs which extend the level of general liberal education in the community and improve public understanding of our diverse cultural tradition;
  - programs which open up new areas of leisure pursuits or serve as introductions to new areas of technology, etc.

It is clear also that adult education must take place, as at present, in a variety of settings ranging from schools and colleges to the workplace and neighbourhood centres, via telematics and open learning links.

Finally, the Edgar report (pp.33-36) comments on major issues for women and for NESB people. These can be summarised in terms of **access**, **course offerings** and **credentialling**.

Access

e.g.

the cost burden falls particularly on women who often lack an independent income and funds from family income that can be spent on their own needs; and

Lack of English language capacity and lack of information on what is available.

Course offerings

e.g.

Especially for NESB:

The main education provided has been ESL through AMEP and TAFE but many do not take it. For many adults, ESL is not the best means of providing education - many cannot reach a sufficient level in English to be able to access educational options, hence, a range of language options is critical, e.g., bilingual programs; support programs in English; and community language teaching. Language-specific training would seem to be an appropriate way for adults to develop literacy skills. Courses are needed which bridge into appropriate viable mainstream education and training and which are supported by multilingual information.

Credentialling and recognition of other experience

e.g.

There is limited provision within accredited courses of subjects designed to meet specific learning needs, e.g., ESL.

Because of the sensitivity the author of the report had to the needs of NESB people, one of the recommendations (1988:18) was that high priority should be given in adult education to funding programs for literacy, basic education and language development. This trend is consistent with the recommendations of the 1987 National Languages Policy.

Australian studies (for example, Kalantzis, Gurney and Cope, 1986; Wickert, 1989; O'Grady and Kang, 1985) identify characteristics of NESB adult learners and learning in the Australian setting. We shall note only a few important and relevant findings. Kalantzis et al. (1989:106) refer to literacy problems for such adults suggesting that high levels of functional illiteracy in English for adults of non-English speaking background correlate with levels of educational attainment in L1. They emphasize the point that literacy dominates society but that, at a more profound level:

> . . . literacy and forms of cognition necessary for effective participation in an advanced industrial society are integrally related. Research has shown that a move from graphic-functional-situational forms of cognition to abstract-logical processes of conceiving the social world as problem-solving, accompanies the move from non-literate, pre-industrial social settings to literate industrialised social settings.

They conclude that:

> There is a general problem in categorising 'illiterates' as there is historical, contextual and subjective heterogeneity, both in the place of origin and in Australia. Illiteracy then cannot be viewed as a **fixed category**, formally assessable by length of schooling but as a **social process** of perceived or real disablement. (Emphasis added)(pp.107-8)

Wickert's (1989) study, which surveyed adult illiteracy levels in Australia, obtained data from ESB and NESB adult samples. These data (p.36) showed that the NESB sample scored lower on every dimension of literacy than the ESB sample and that literacy in English did not seem to improve with length of residence in Australia.

O'Grady and Kang (1985) suggested that research in the field of adult language learning supports the approach that the immigrant's first language is a possible aid to second language learning, and that the use of L1 resources is basic to the provision of a culturally sensitive language (or literacy) program. They refer also to modes of the learning process. They recommend (1989:16) the linking of bilingualism with English language and literacy training, asserting that developments in theories of adult learning have resulted in an increasing emphasis on the central role of the learner in the

learning process. This emphasis is, they say, reflected in the fact that the Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) has adopted the aim of providing a learner-centred system of adult education. The consequence is that learners make informed choices about their learning programs and continue to have control over their learning through on-going consultation and negotiation. A learner-centred system also implies the need for an unambiguous exchange of information. They caution that the use of the L1 in learner-centred systems should not be restricted solely for bilingual teaching. As well, the provision of information to prospective students, counselling, consultation and needs analysis all in some way should involve the use of L1.

Practitioners in the literacy field also have contributions on this topic. Faine and Manton (VALBEC Discussion Paper, 1988:1) have stated that there is a gap in provision for bilingual residents of Victoria who require literacy tuition and, at present, the providers of E.S.L. and Literacy do not adequately co-operate in, nor co-ordinate, the referral of students. Mechanisms of co-operation are being developed. For example, the AMES educational counsellors play an active role in the placement of students.

The Women's Ethnic Network of Victoria, in a report entitled 'fish out of water', published in February 1990 (pp. i-vii) suggested that NESB women underutilized universal services which reflected a lack of accessibility. Changes to increase the likelihood of meeting the personal and social needs of these women entailed the greater use of ethno-specific groups and bilingual workers and the improvement of literacy skills through locally-based classes.

It is noteworthy that only the literature with a special focus on bilingualism and basic education/literacy has specific solutions to offer. Other official reports seem unable to move beyond the mere recognition of language and learning problems for NESB adults in Australia's predominantly English speaking environment.

Education, Literacy, Training and Workforce Reform

The transformation of older notions of adult education and training has been catalysed, to a large extent, in Australia by the Hawke Government's active promotion since 1983 of increased efficiency and equity in the national workforce. Along with this has come an awareness of the costs of low levels of literacy. As **award** (and industry) **restructuring** has played such a central role in this process, it is important for this project to outline the concept and its impact on women. In the following section, background information is provided on award restructuring, migrant work experience and labour market status, with specific reference to NESB women.

Award restructuring

(i) Significance

Award restructuring and subsequent workplace reform are major priorities for Australian industry, Government and unions at this time. A crucial element is the tripartite approach on the part of employers, unions and government acting in collaboration to improve efficiency and productivity at the macro level of industry in general and at the micro level of individual workplaces. In 1988, the then Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission established a new wage system which included the **structural efficiency principle**. This led to a review and change of industrial awards to eliminate outmoded classifications and wage structures and proposals for their replacement by more appropriate ones in the light of modern industry. Also in 1988, the Confederation of Australian Industry and the Australian Council of Trade Unions prepared a Joint Statement on Participative Practices stressing the interdependence of economic efficiency and work based social justice issues. The objectives identified in that statement were as follows:

(a) To register the mutual commitment of the parties to co-operation in the development of improved industrial relations, efficiency and competitiveness throughout Australian industry;

(b) To highlight the shared conviction of the parties that:

(i) the future success of Australian industry requires the adoption of co-operative effort in individual enterprises, and

(ii) co-operation is best achieved by furthering the practices of information sharing, communication and the active involvement of employees in pursuing mutually beneficial objectives, including

* efficiency
* quality of worklife
* competitiveness
* job security
* reliability and quality
* skills development
* cost effectiveness
* a healthy and safe working environment
* flexibility and responsiveness
* innovation and creativity;

(c) To establish a framework, by way of a clear statement of peak level commitment to mutually endorsed principles, for furthering co-operation at the industry level and at the level of individual enterprises; and

(d) To encourage employers, employees and their representatives throughout all sectors of Australian industry to adopt the principles and processes outlined in this joint statement as a means of contributing to improvements in the quality of worklife for all employees and the efficiency of their enterprises.

(Confederation of Australian Industry, Australian Council of Trade Unions, April 1988)

This whole issue is one which throws into strong relief the human resources investment for industries in change and this is especially salient where an industry's workforce is culturally and linguistically diverse and in a country which has an official multiculturalism policy resting on three main dimensions - cultural identity, social justice and economic efficiency. Management and unions, government and workers, and the community in general, all have a stake in restructuring with its potential for structural and attitudinal change. The need for investment in human resources with the utilization of latent skills must accompany advances in technological change. Restructuring can be accomplished only with due recognition and promotion of diversity in the workforce in terms of skills and work practices, appropriate information systems and training programs which subsume identification of existing competences, skills audits, English in the workplace, re-skilling, multi-skilling, assessment and accreditation.

Gender, ethnicity and age are all characteristics of workers which may modify the nature and extent of restructuring. As the Employment and Skills Formation Council (Australia; National Board for Employment, Education and Training, 1989:vii) has noted:

> It is well understood that award restructuring will have a major impact on all workers. But in the case of **women workers**, this impact will be even more significant. For women, the restructuring process will either reinforce the existing division of labour by sex or it will mean the revaluing of women's traditionally undervalued skills. (Emphasis added)

The fact that women's participation rate in the labour force has increased massively (DEET Women's Bureau, ***New Brooms***, 1989:2), that women are concentrated in specific industries and occupations (for example, community services, wholesale and retail, manufacturing and finance, property and business services: see DILGEA, ***About Migrant Women***, 1986:26), and that women are heavily represented in part-time work (DEET Women's Bureau, ***Clean Sweep***, 1990:4) means that award restructuring will impact differently on women in comparison with men. For example, in line with principles of equity and equal opportunity, new classifications should be gender neutral in description. The Employment and Skills Formation Council has developed guidelines for all aspects of award restructuring relevant to women including communication strategies, wages, skills analysis, classifications, training, work organization, services and consultative processes.

It is also the case that major structural shifts in industries such as service activities (which are high employers of women) have come about because of changing national and international markets, deregulation, technological innovation, and developments in service delivery. There are parallel changes in other high female employing industries including clerical occupations and even some in manufacturing settings.

The effects of these changes are compounded by the process of award restructuring which has the potential to reshape industrial relations in Australia and to modify significantly the employment status and working environment of all workers including the increasing numbers of women workers (DEET Women's Bureau ***Clean Sweep***, 1990:4). As this report points out:

> Traditionally female-dominated industries tend to have fewer classifications and flatter career paths than even the streamlined awards proposed for traditionally male industries. This means that career paths in some female-dominated industries may require the establishment of additional classifications based on hitherto unrecognized factors such as industry experience and which are capable of being articulated with other awards for related industries or occupations.

It is crucial, however, to the implementation of new career paths that access to adequate and appropriate training, especially off-the-job programs in low-skill, high turnover occupations is provided. This may have implications for the provision of generic and modular training which is transferable across industries.

Immigrant workers have particular problems in joining the Australian labour force. The immigration process itself is an important factor. Those workers who are of non-English speaking background have additional factors of language, culture and even racism with which to deal. The partners in restructuring, that is, employers, government and trade unions, have to take into account the issues pertinent to the multicultural society (Eyles Miltenyi Davis, 1988:4). The establishment in 1989 of a National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) is one development towards this end. It will promote and facilitate the development of national, competency-based skills standards for recognition of professions and para-professions and will co-ordinate previously separate migrant labour market and vocational support services (DEET Economic and Policy Analysis Division, 1989:4-5).

(ii) **Definition**

The key concepts in award restructuring should be defined. A document produced by the ACTU, entitled ***Award Restructuring: The impact on adult migrant education*** (1989:1) undertakes this task. First, the meaning of the term award is clarified.

> Award - an award is a legal document covering particular industries or jobs which describes the jobs performed and the wages and conditions that apply to them. Awards are either federal (made with the Australian Industrial Relations Commission); others are state awards (made by the different State Industrial Relations Commissions). It is interesting to note that most women workers are covered by State Awards.

Second, the term restructuring is described.

> Restructuring - means changing the descriptions of jobs contained in the award. Along with the changed description come new minimum award rates and conditions (e.g., in the latter case, perhaps paid time off for training). Women workers generally receive minimum award wages and conditions. They do not usually receive over-award payments.

It is important also to comprehend the elements of restructuring. These have been spelled out also by the ACTU (Ibid:2-3). Restructuring does not simply involve a reduction in award classifications and a broadening of work definitions. It involves the elements referred to in the National Wage and State Wage cases. The elements may be summarised as:

* eliminating impediments to multi-skilling and broadening the range of tasks for each worker;
* creating appropriate relativities between different categories of workers within the award and enterprise level;
* ensuring that working patterns and arrangements enhance flexibility and the efficiency of industry;
* including properly fixed minimum rates for classifications in awards;
* updating and/or rationalising the list of respondents to awards; and
* addressing any cases where award provisions discriminate against sections of the workforce [and includes attention to issues of]
  - career paths;
  - training;
  - wages;
  - English language training; and
  - equal employment opportunity.

We might ask why is restructuring necessary? One answer is provided by the ACTU (Ibid:1) and identifies those features of current practices that are unsatisfactory. These are:

* out-of-date job descriptions;
* lack of job descriptions and opportunities to receive more money for advanced work, i.e., no career levels or career paths; and
* lack of provision in awards for more pay for higher skill levels and further training.

Similarly, the ACTU (Ibid.) has commented on the potential benefits of restructuring. The following features have been distinguished:

* Better minimum rates of pay;
* More interesting jobs and opportunity for promotion;
* More opportunity for workers to receive better and more training for their work;
* More efficient industries to benefit the whole of Australia;
* Unions in consultation with employers will work out where existing jobs fit in the new award;
* Workers are not forced to undergo extra training; and
* Problems, e.g., lack of English and barriers, e.g., to higher level jobs for women workers must be addressed and affirmative action plans put into place in workplaces with 100 or more employees.

(iii) **The Place of Language and Literacy**

Award restructuring and English language training are increasingly seen as interdependent concepts. An ACTU Executive decision of March 1989 (Ibid:2) accepted the following proposals for action:

All award restructuring negotiations should include:

* recognition of the significance of English language training specifically, and literacy and numeracy training generally;
* establishment of policies and practices for the recognition of skills and qualifications gained overseas;
* ensuring that integrated within career structure proposals there are equal employment and affirmative action plans with English language training opportunities; and
* requirements that in the process of consultation resources such as interpreters and translations are provided.

Examples of these kinds of conditions have been included in the negotiation documents of various industries. Among the industries to be moving in this direction are metals, health, rail, textiles, clothing and footwear, miscellaneous and power. Inevitably, for these new conditions to be attained through restructuring of industries which employ a multicultural workforce, policies and programs will require modification.

Modifications to take account of cultural and linguistic heterogeneity might include the following:

* A co-ordinated approach by all levels of government to the provision of appropriate multilingual information targeting migrant workers;

* A recognition of the experience and skills of migrant workers and how these skills may be utilized on the job rather than a narrow approach restricted to acceptance of overseas qualifications;

* Award restructuring that recognizes and formally acknowledges the skills of migrant workers and at the same time provides practical opportunities for training and job mobility;

* Strategies for increasing migrant worker participation in workplace decision-making;

* The development of English in the workplace policy appropriate to the variety of needs of migrant workers and diversity of workplace organizations, but in addition making available bilingual programs wherever feasible;

* An increased awareness on the part of trade unions that training provided by them must be culturally and linguistically appropriate;

* The development of on the job training and training programs through TAFE and/or other tertiary institutions which are relevant to a multicultural workforce and address the issue of bilingual literacy; and

* Improved health and safety practices on the job which include multilingual information.

(iv) **Migrant Women, Work and Restructuring**

(a) *Experience of Work*

A report by the then Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (1986:5-6) has summarised the experience of many immigrant women workers upon settlement in Australia.

> The hundreds of thousands of immigrant women who have settled since World War II were recruited for their contribution to Australia's population growth. Generally unskilled and without English, they were and are the disparate, vulnerable labour force on whose efforts Australia's manufacturing industry rests. In good economic times and bad, immigrant women suffer working conditions in factories which undermine and destroy their physical and mental health. The threat of massive displacement from paid employment, even from jobs devalued by gender segregation and discrimination, compounds their vulnerability to exploitation. Among these women, the agony and debilitation of repetition strain injury have been a reality for decades. Retrenchment following technological change and the restructuring of the manufacturing industry disproportionately affects immigrant women. Without a good command of English, women's access

> to education, retraining, and re-employment opportunities is unequal if not non-existent. Ironically, it has been the necessity to take the role of workers and mothers which has excluded most of them from participating in English language courses. Migrant women, particularly those with no English, have a very difficult adjustment to make to life in Australia. More often than not, they are isolated by the economic necessity to work, as well as by class, language and cultural barriers. In sheer materialistic terms, immigration may improve their standard of living, but at what cost to their human dignity and quality of life? Immigrant women have held their families together against class and cultural odds and active discrimination. Immigrant women in the role of guardian of language, culture and religion have often been undervalued by society.

This extract highlights many of the main issues which must be taken into account in defining a clear, appropriate and feasible relationship between provisions for literacy and basic education and restructuring for NESB women. Many NESB women of migrant stock have not had the chance to learn English or to learn it well. Lack of good English is a highly salient constraint on their social access, mobility and participation in society. It severely limits their employment opportunities, especially if they wish to move out of low skilled work areas into jobs with greater possibilities for reward, satisfaction and career paths. Lack of access to literacy programs and formal education is believed to be widespread among some immigrant groups (for example, Middle Eastern, South American and some Asian groups) particularly among women. Illiteracy effectively excludes them from all English language, education, training and retraining opportunities. Literacy programs in English language or the home language are rarely accessible to immigrant women needing them.

It is important to consider not only women with limited educational background and the additional difficulties they face in coping with work in a new society, but also those women with more extensive educational qualifications from their country of origin. Unfortunately, advanced English linked with bridging courses for professionally and technically qualified women are similarly not accessible or even well-developed in Australia. There is also the continuing problem that their non-Australian qualifications often remain unused or used to the full. English courses in industry where provided are more likely to reach male workers rather than female workers. Immigrant women working in small factories rarely have access to English on the job. The Home Tutor Scheme which supplements the more formal Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP) cannot service all those who wish to have instruction at home. Such women often do not have access to appropriate radio or television English language programs (this is partly related to the limited service provided by the Special Broadcasting Service or SBS). Labour market training programs by-pass many immigrant women because selection is made from the pool of unemployed persons registering with the CES. Married women are ineligible for the Unemployment Benefit and hence frequently do not register even though they might wish to obtain employment. Government initiatives to retrain retrenched workers such as the Commonwealth Labour Adjustment Arrangements (LATA) have been largely directed to industries with a predominantly male workforce. The emphasis on youth in the labour market programs and post-secondary education

potentially disadvantages mature-age women needing access to training and retraining. The stigma that women displace youth and men in jobs, and that this is inherently unfair, is a hard myth to dispel.

It is hardly surprising then that targeting of immigrant women in government programs (for example, the Commonwealth Employment Program or CEP) has been largely unsuccessful. Such women are under-represented in proportion to measured unemployment rates among those undergoing training and work experience. Particular impediments (for example, in 1986 Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) eligibility rules had not been relaxed to admit unemployed immigrant women unregistered with the CES for at least 8 months) seem to assail women (and migrant women) at every turn. The necessity to contribute to the family income in itself makes it harder for NESB women to refuse low pay, poor conditions and exposure to health and safety hazards. This constraint is compounded by a similar limitation to take advantage of education, training and retraining opportunities.

The DIEA report (1986:13-15) noted above identifies a whole range of largely disadvantageous features which characterise the working lives of NESB women to a greater extent than for other women. These are:

* factory working conditions are usually bad;

* legislation and industrial awards governing working conditions are rarely enforced on behalf of immigrant women especially in small factories;

* neither employers nor union officials have provided many of them with essential information in their home language about preventing industrial accidents and disease and about their workers' rights;

* RSI, eyestrain, urinary tract infections, etc., are longstanding complaints attributable to working conditions;

* compensation settlements to injured/ill immigrant women workers take longer and are less in value than those for men and for non-immigrants. The system is rarely explained in the home language, and advocacy is difficult to obtain. Some simply do not lodge claims;

* language and cultural differences between workers are often exploited by employers to increase competition and thereby production; and also to undermine the organization of workers;

* vulnerability to retrenchment is high, even more so for part-time and casual workers, particularly in the manufacturing industry as it undergoes major restructuring and technological change;

* piece-workers, working at home (outworkers), in sweat shops and small factories are mostly unprotected by union awards and surveillance and extremely open to exploitation;

* the number of hidden workers including outworkers are unknown;

* hours of work are rarely negotiable;

* sexual harassment and discriminatory practices are common;

* some women highly qualified and experienced in their country of origin are employed in unskilled or semi-skilled work because qualifications are unrecognized;

* when retrenched or fired, immigrant women without good English are unemployed for longer periods than others seeking employment;

* the unemployment rate for immigrant women of NESB is consistently higher than for other women;

* hidden unemployment (women not registered with the CES) is believed to be high;

* limited access to good quality child care negatively affects immigrant women's participation in English, education and training programs and their access to equal employment opportunities;

* existing childcare services are inadequate in number and are under-utilized because they are generally inaccessible (cost, hours, location) and not acceptable (monolingual English) for the care of children who do not yet understand or speak English; and

* access to good health care by immigrant women and their dependent children is limited by their lack of English, lack of other community languages on the part of medical staff and lack of female professional interpreters. (Also lack of information, counselling, diagnosis and treatment in a culturally appropriate way.) Lack of refuges and care and support for the elderly are other problems.

In these days of heightened multicultural awareness, many may query the need to identify these multiple problems. On the other hand, given the frequent gaps between public rhetoric and implementation, we have thought it desirable to at least list these negative factors in NESB women's experiences in Australian society.

(b) *Labour Market Status*

Another way of contextualising immigrant women and work is to obtain data on their actual labour market status. A recent publication by Wooden (1990) provides a useful overview. Wooden (1990:vii) has found that the major factors influencing labour market status are **English language problems, education** and **length of residence**. Employment probabilities increase with rising English language skills, education and length of residence in Australia. Post-school qualifications gained overseas, however, do not have the same employment enhancing effects as similar level qualifications gained in Australia, reflecting either differences in quality of education, lack of recognition of overseas qualifications, the country specificity of education (especially tertiary education), and perhaps a degree of discrimination.

Wooden examines various factors which impinge on labour market status especially dimensions such as whether people are employed, unemployed or not in the labour force (not employed and not looking for work). Of course, other ways of measuring achievement in the labour market are earnings, occupational status and quality of working conditions. We shall review Wooden's findings only briefly and focus especially on the situation pertaining to migrant women.

Migration category and gender

Wooden's data based on the period 1984-1987 (and partly to be found in Graph 1.1) suggest that the division of gender in the migrant intake is very close to equal although males are more prominent among refugees, unsponsored migrants and New Zealanders. Females dominate family sponsored migrants, no doubt a reflection of the much older age population in this migration category.

Graph 1.1.

Migration Category by Gender, March 1987, Migrant Adults Arriving After 1960 ('000)

Taken from ABS, Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Migrants, Australia, March 1987, Cat. No. 6250.0.

Source: Wooden, M. Migrant Labour Market Status, AGPS, Canberra, 1990, p.8

Examination of Figure 1.1 and Table 1.1 indicates that:

(i) participation rates for males and females have moved in the opposite directions, with the male rate declining and the female rate rising;

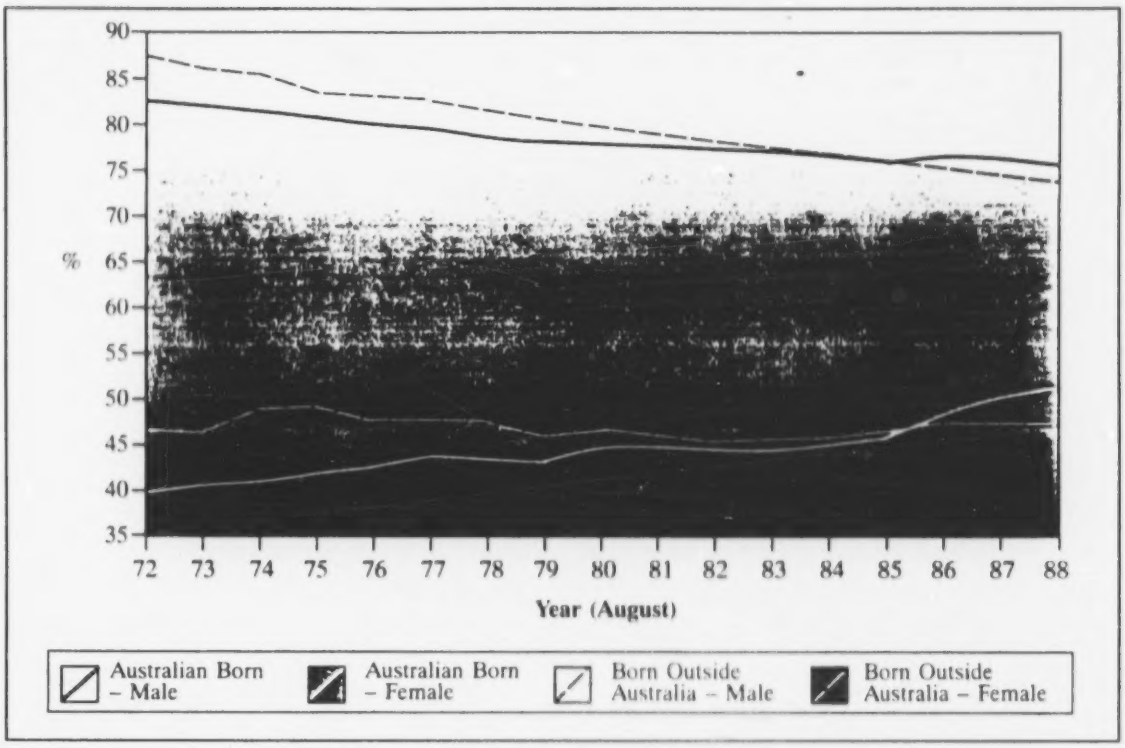
(ii) while the overseas born had higher rates of participation than their Australian born counterparts during the 1980s, the relative growth paths have seen the Australian born move ahead of the overseas born;

(iii) the pattern of participation of ESB migrants is close to that for the Australian born; and

(iv) participation rates for the NESB are lower than for ESB or Australian born.

Figure 1.1

Labour Force Participation Rates, Migrants and Australian Born, 1972 to 1988



Taken from ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Cat. Nos. 6203.0 and 6204.0, various years.

Source: Ibid., p.14.

Table 1.1

Labour Force Participation Rates by Birthplace, Age and Gender, March 1987

	Male				*Female*			
Age	*Aust Born*	*Overseas Born*			*Aust Born*	*Overseas Born*		
		ESB	*NESB*	*Total*		*ESB*	*NESB*	*Total*
15-17	51.6	51.8	32.9	41.3	53.0	46.9	30.3	38.0
18-24	91.8	91.3	75.9	83.3	79.8	82.3	65.6	74.3
25-34	96.8	96.2	93.5	94.7	63.4	67.7	60.0	63.2
35-44	95.6	96.7	93.9	94.9	66.6	73.3	61.9	66.7
45-54	92.0	94.4	84.9	88.5	56.9	63.8	50.1	55.5
55-59	77.9	84.0	74.0	77.8	33.3	42.7	27.5	33.7
60-64	44.8	50.0	55.4	53.3	14.4	18.1	11.6	14.1
65+	9.9	6.3	9.1	7.7	3.0	4.1	*	3.2
Total	**77.9**	**77.6**	**75.1**	**76.2**	**51.7**	**54.2**	**46.2**	**49.7**
15-64	86.2	89.2	83.2	85.6	60.0	64.4	51.7	57.1

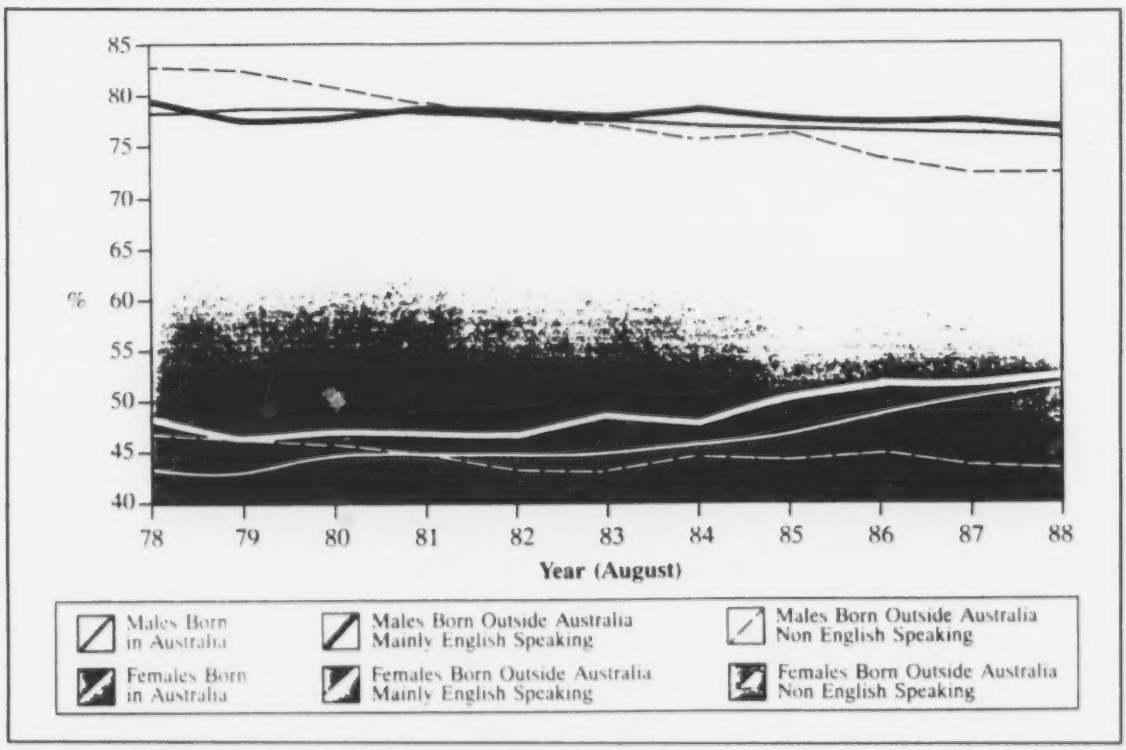
Taken from ABS, The Labour Force, Australia, March 1987, Cat. No. 6203.0

Source: Ibid., p.15

Figure 1.2 shows that for every age category, female NESB have the lowest participation rates, whereas female ESB migrants often exceed even Australian born females in labour market participation rates. Differences in participation rate relate to motivation, English language, educational qualifications, length of residence and marital status.

Figure 1.2

Labour Force Participation Rates by Birthplace, 1978 to 1988



Taken from Unpublished data provided by the ABS.

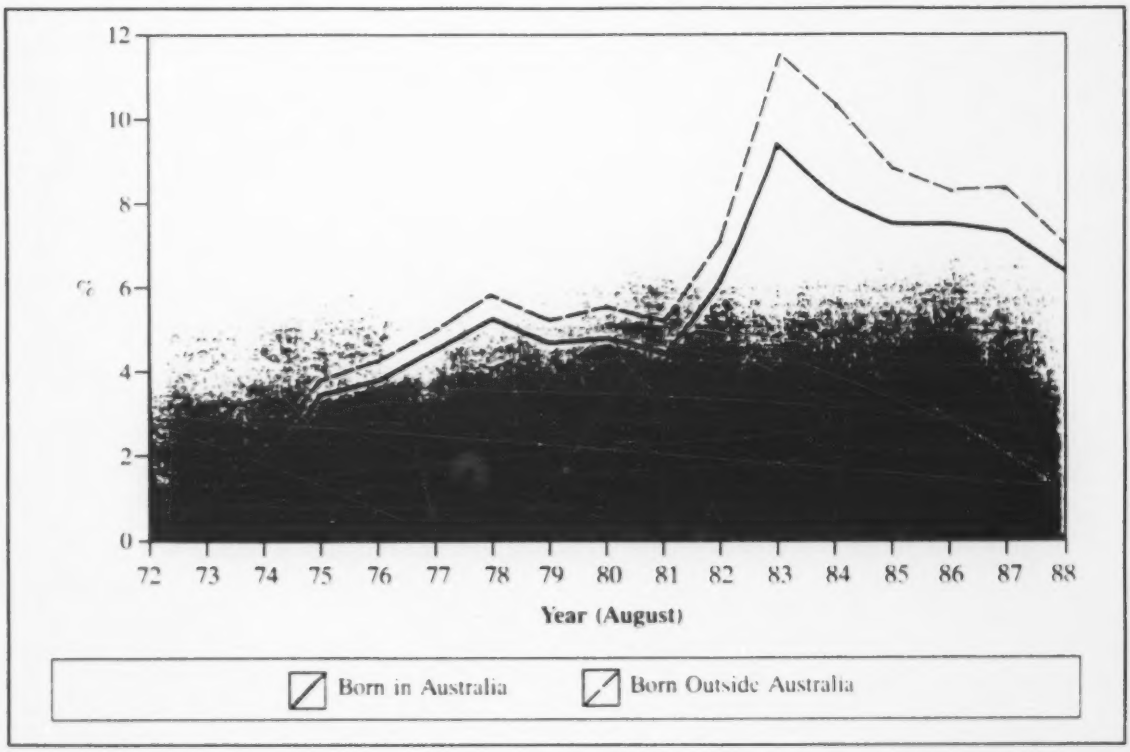
Source: Ibid., p.15.

* Unemployment

Examining Figures 1.3 to 1.6 provides comparative data on unemployment.

Figure 1.3

Unemployment Rates, Migrants and Australian Born, 1972 to 1988, Males

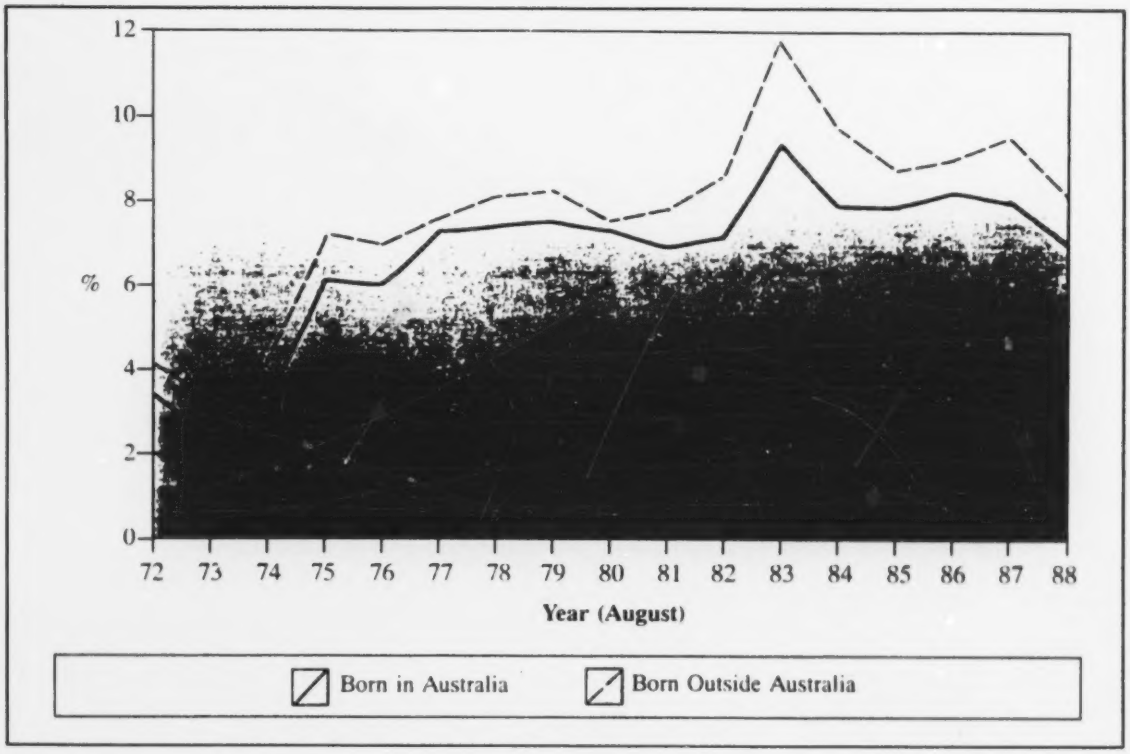


Taken from ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Cat. Nos. 6203.0 and 6204.0, various years.

Source: Ibid., p.16.

Figure 1.4

Unemployment Rates, Migrants and Australian Born, 1972 to 1988, Females

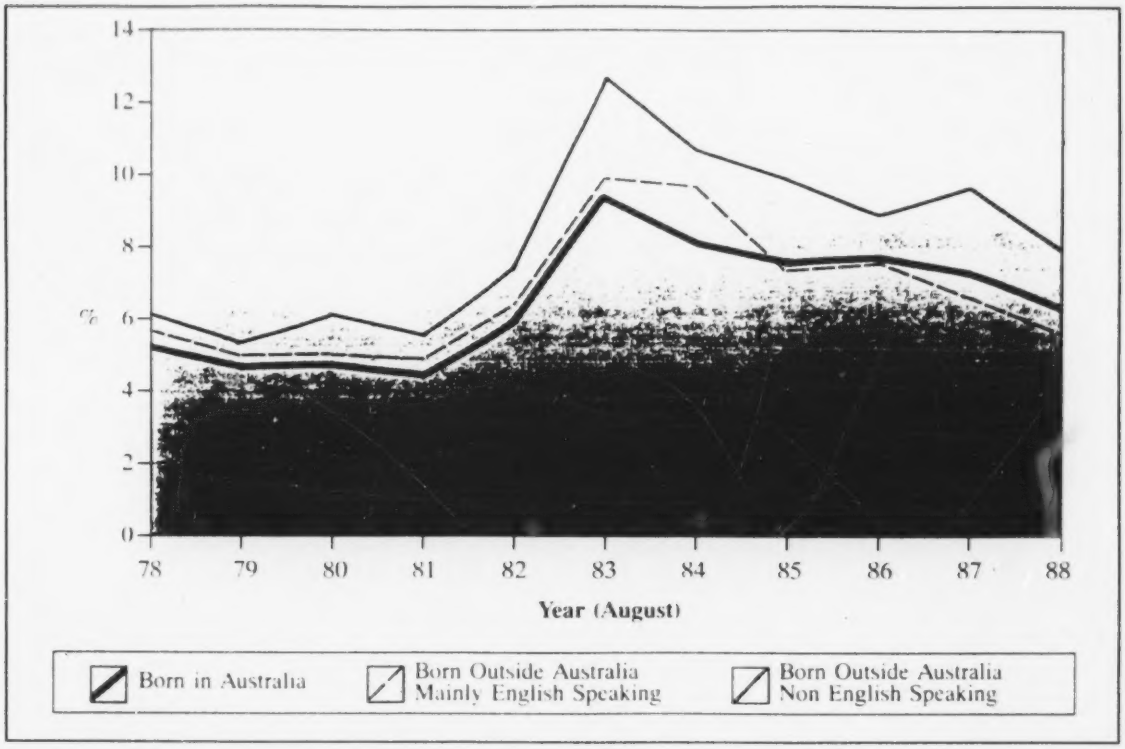


Taken from ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Cat. Nos. 6203.0 and 6204.0, various years.

Source: Ibid., p.17.

Figure 1.5

Unemployment Rates by Birthplace, 1978 to 1988, Males



Taken from Unpublished data provided by the ABS.

Source: Ibid., p.17.

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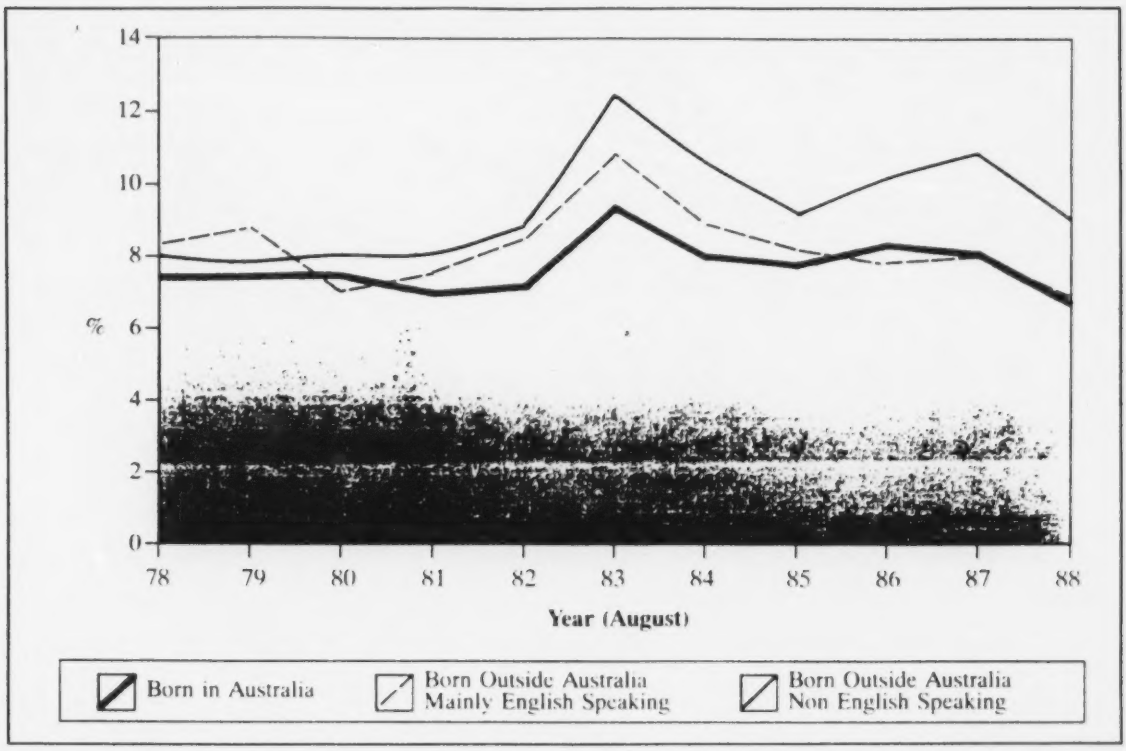
Figure 1.6

Unemployment Rates by Birthplace, 1978 to 1988, Females



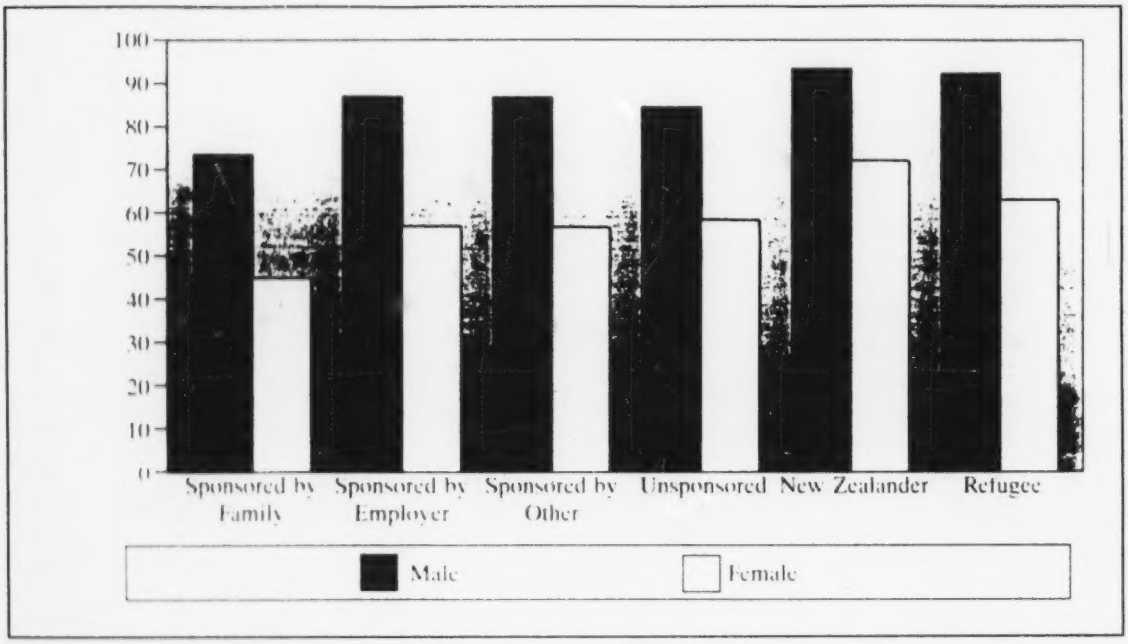
Taken from Unpublished data provided by the ABS.

Source: Ibid., p.18.

The essential findings from these data are that unemployment rates have always been higher for the overseas born and rates for women migrants are higher than for males. Unemployment rates are highest of all for women of NESB, born overseas, except in the 15–17 and 18–24 age groups in which Australian born females have the highest rate.

Figure 1.7

Labour Force Participation Rates by Migration Category and Gender, March 1987



Taken from ABS, Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Migrants, Australia, March 1987, Cat. No. 6250.0.

Source: Ibid., p.20.

Referring to Figure 1.7, Wooden concludes the following. Labour force participation by migration categories by gender shows that New Zealanders and refugees generally have higher labour force participation rates than other migrants and especially migrants sponsored by the family (the lower age factor for these two groups is important). The pattern of participation rates by migration category for females, surprisingly, mirrors that of males despite the fact that females are typically not the principal applicant. This suggests that the distinction between principal applicant and partner or dependents of the principal applicant (applicant status) is not very important. That is, labour force participation of the principal applicant is positively associated with labour force participation of the partner.

Wooden reiterates the factors influencing migrant labour status. These are **gender, period of residence, birthplace, age, education, presence of family, labour market status and occupation prior to emigration**, and **migration category**. He warns that simple two way statistical tables may pick up spurious relationships, e.g., family sponsored migrants have a relatively high unemployment rate but this may be due not to sponsorship **per se** but to age distribution and the relatively high proportion of partners accompanying the principal applicant in this category. One must therefore use multivariate statistical techniques. We shall briefly note the kinds of findings Wooden has obtained by using this technique.

1. Birthplace and language proficiency:

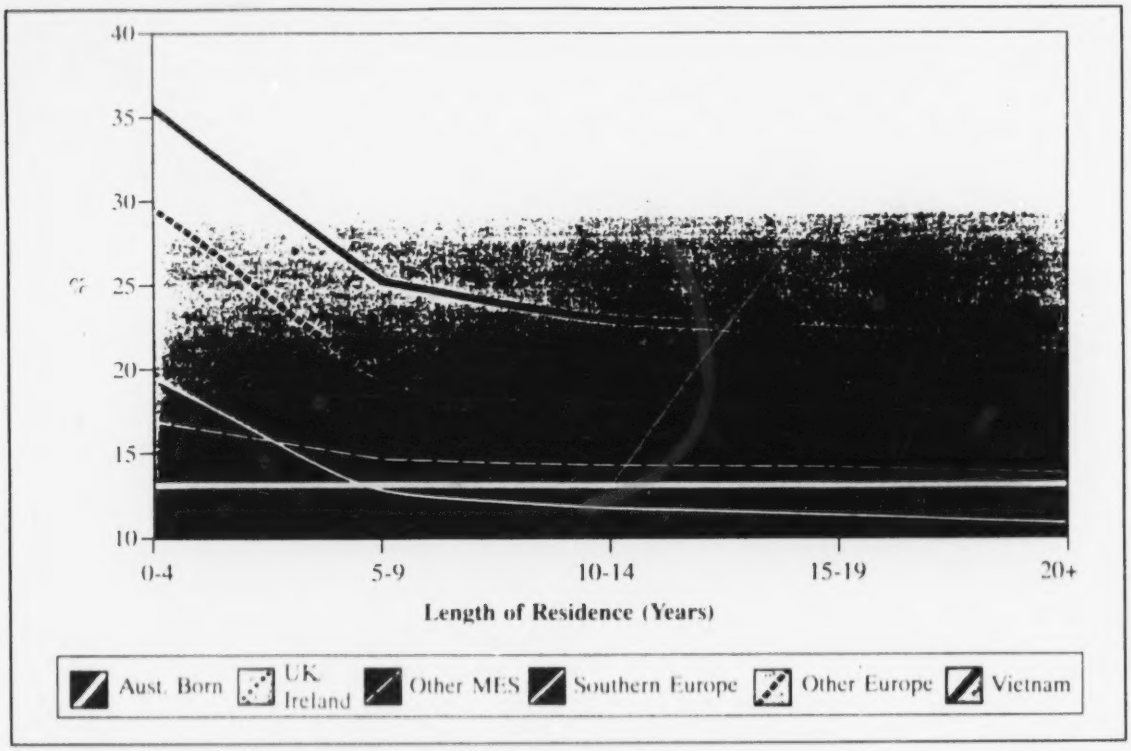
   Wooden found that the greatest contrast is between ESB and NESB migrants but for males, at least, south Europeans and Asians do far less well even compared with other NESB migrants. If one controls for language, only Asians remain as the most severely affected and females from south Europe do not seem to be especially disadvantaged. Overall though, those who speak English poorly or not at all have a probability of unemployment which is about 15 percentage points higher in the case of males and 8 percentage points in the case of females when calculated at the mean age.

2. Education:

   The results suggested to Wooden that better educated persons fare much better in the labour market than the less well educated, but the returns to education in Australia differ for different ethnic groups. For example, education obtained abroad is not easily transferable to the Australian labour market. Overall, for all levels of education, the Australian born do better than the overseas born, and there is some evidence that post-school qualifications gained overseas do not have as large an effect on employability as do the same level of qualifications obtained in Australia, but only for migrants from NESB and only for males. The magnitude of the effect is about a 9 percentage point difference in the probability of unemployment calculated at the mean age and length of residence.

Figure 1.8

Estimated Probabilities of Unemployment by Birthplace, Males

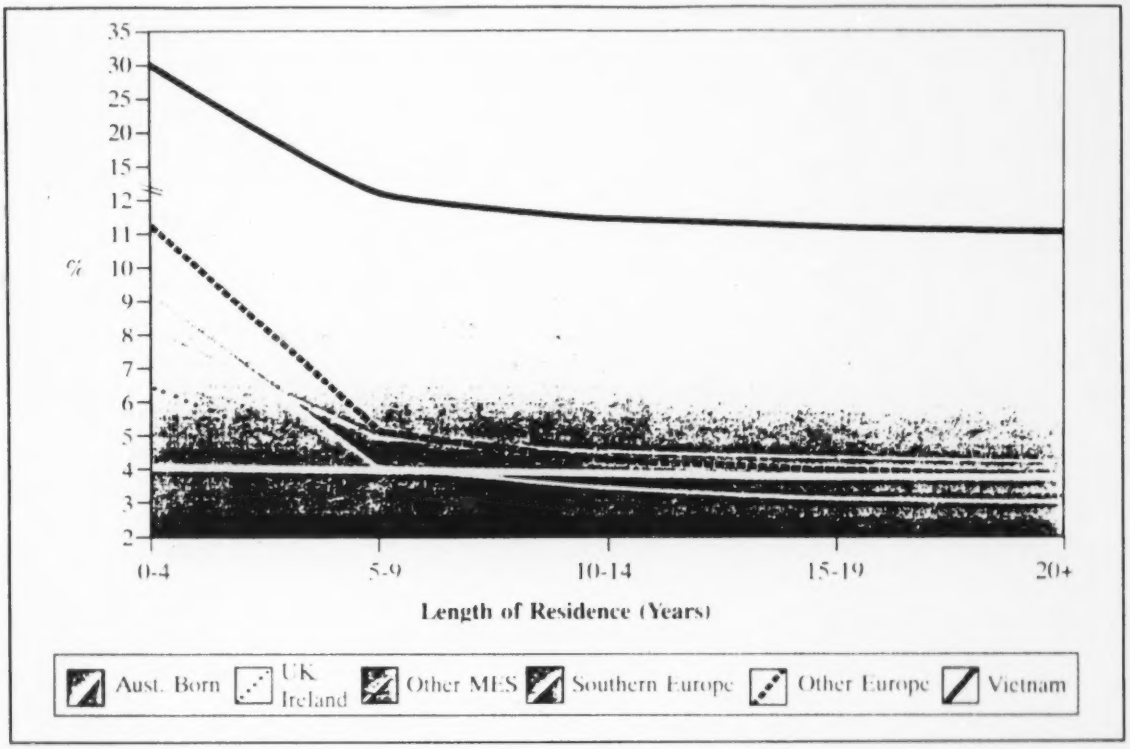


Taken from 1986 Census of Population and Housing.

Source: Ibid., p.31.

Figure 1.9

Estimated Probabilities of Unemployment by Birthplace, Females



Taken from 1986 Census of Population and Housing

Source: Ibid., p.32.

3. A question of time?:

For Wooden, one of the most important variables coming out of multivariate analysis was **length of residence**. Based on Figure 1.8, Wooden showed that improvement over time is only marked by NESB residents. Note that for males, southern Europeans after 5 to 9 years of residence begin to fare better than the Australian born in terms of the likelihood of unemployment. A similar pattern is apparent for females. The main difference between males and females is that both southern

Europeans and British born have probabilities of employment that fall below the Australian born after 5-9 years residence while the unemployment probabilities amongst Vietnamese are, in relative terms, so high that Wooden was forced to make the vertical scale discontinuous in order to continue the results in Figure 1.9. It seems that **refugee status rather than birthplace** per se is the major determinant.

To summarize, apart from refugee status, none of the apparent differences in unemployment rates between different migration categories noted was found to be significant in multivariate analysis. Wooden concludes that explanations for refugee difficulties in the labour market cannot be explained solely by poor English skills, occupational skill deficiencies nor the recentness of their arrival. They probably result also from the greater adjustment problems in settlement (due to previous trauma) and perhaps some element of discrimination.

Conclusion

The range of themes canvassed in this Introduction gives an indication of the complexity of the issues being explored by this research project. The literature reviewed prior to embarking on the empirical and fieldwork aspects of the study encompassed official reports and policy documents at Federal, State and Local Government levels, reports produced by non-government organizations/agencies, statistical and other demographic data, and an extensive academic literature including theoretical, conceptual and empirical analyses covering an array of topics such as language policy and migration, accreditation for skills of overseas workers, bilingualism and literacy. These many and varied sources are documented in the Bibliography.

The brief review of the major themes of the study from this literature supported our contention that location, functioning, needs and problems of NESB women as a specific group in Australia must continue to be the focus of research, especially research in which they may play an active role and derive, at least potentially, some benefit from. NESB women, as well as those of ESB, are not insulated from labour market and workforce changes which characterise the 90s in Australia. Matters of restructuring have profound implications for literacy, language, basic education and other forms of education and skills training for those in the workforce, wishing to enter, re-enter and even for those who, for a range of reasons, are excluded from the workforce. There are issues which affect all workers or only women workers. There is the possibility that some issues have greater or different salience for NESB women. There is no doubt that bilingualism in the Australian context is both an advantage and a problem. Our interest in this project has been on how both of those aspects are 'managed' in relation to literacy, basic education and work in Victoria.

CHAPTER 2

THE STUDY

Aims and Objectives

Aim of the study can be determined as follows:

> The general aim of the study is to enhance the opportunities for and access to further education and/or paid employment for women of non-English speaking background ((NESB).

The Objectives of the study:

1. To identify categories of NESB women currently engaged in adult literacy and/or basic education (ALBE) courses and those for whom such provisions are appropriate but who are not presently enrolled.

2. To explore current provisions available in metropolitan, suburban, provincial and rural settings.

3. To explore factors facilitating and hindering the delivery of ALBE services to NESB women.

4. To target women of NESB who are:
   (a) literate in their mother tongue (L1) and illiterate in English (L2)
   (b) illiterate in L1 and L2
   (c) literate in L1 and L2 but are dissatisfied with their knowledge and/or use of L2.

5. To obtain information on selected samples of these groups including:
   * their personal and educational history
   * current situation and future employment
   * future aspirations for both oral and written communication
   * use of L1 and L2
   * perceptions of issues and problems concerning ALBE needs and their satisfaction.

6. From these data, to establish their adult literacy and basic education (ALBE) needs

7. To identify gaps and provide recommendations for the required diversity of literacy programs to meet their needs.

8. To set guidelines on matters pertinent to the recommendations including bilingual learning, staff development, methodology, assessment, credentialling, materials development, dissemination of information, use of new technologies, independent study and distance education, extension of contact hours, and non-predagogical needs.

Methodology

Given the aims and objectives of the study, the constraints of resources and time, and the inherent difficulty in tracing NESB women for whom ALBE provisions are appropriate but which are not being used, it was decided to employ a multi-faceted methodology including the following strategies:

* Review of the **published literature** (for example, scholarly books and journals, official reports, journals, magazines, newsletters and publicity material from those working in the field)

* Collect and review of **unpublished materials** (for example, course programs, lesson plans, course materials, reports in mimeo form, written comments from informants)

* Conduct **interviews**, both face-to-face and telephone, with tutors, key informants (for example, administrators, counsellors, teachers and volunteers, private providers, students associated with literacy and basic education courses, members of ethnic group associations, representatives of unions, employers, voluntary agencies, interested and involved academics)

* Conduct **surveys** (for example, with administrators, teachers and NESB women enrolled in ALBE courses, in selected metropolitan, suburban, provincial and rural settings)

* Attend relevant **conferences**, **seminars** and **workshops**

* **Observe a range of classes** in different courses in diverse learning contexts (for example, TAFE, AMES, CAEs, SkillShare, Migrant Resource Centres, Women's Learning Centres, Neighbourhood houses, hospitals, factories, migrant hostel, tertiary language centres).

* Collaborate with DFE personnel to run a **workshop** for literacy and basic education with workers in voluntary agencies to gather information and facilitate exchange of information amongst these workers

* Develop a **network of skilled informants** from whom written and oral feedback was sought on the draft recommendations and guidelines of the report of the study.

Procedures

The multi-faceted methodology required the elaboration of a set of procedures for its accomplishment. The procedures included:

1. Drafting a **statement** on the project and its information needs and circulating to a wide network of selected, relevant and expert informants. (See Appendix 1). In this group were included known administrators and teachers working in adult literacy and basic education, academics interested and involved in this field, contacts supplied by the Division of Further Education, overseas experts. This exploratory call for assistance aimed to set up continuing contacts with key informants, elicit further contacts by the 'snowballing' technique, gather actual information on provision, issues, problems, references to relevant literature, etc. The task was shared by the principal investigators with help from the research assistant.

2. Based on our own knowledge, reading and preliminary information collected via the statement of the project, we met with a variety of interested **informants** to enhance the data base which was beginning to be established as an outcome of responses to the statement of the project. The principal investigators were largely responsible for this task.

3. A review of **published literature** was conducted throughout the project with the compilation of a bibliography. This was undertaken by the principal investigators.

4. **Other instruments** were devised and trialled. These included a range of questionnaires and letters (See Appendix 1). This task was undertaken jointly by the principal investigators and the research assistant.

5. **Decisions** were taken on **sampling** of locations statewide where literacy and basic education provisions might be found. The decision was made to survey by mail to gather data, with the option of drawing on one or more key informants to collect additional information if needed. The research assistant co-ordinated this aspect of the study.

6. The **strategy** decided on for gathering data **in metropolitan and suburban locations** was as follows. Preliminary letters and questionnaires were sent by post, to selected centres taken from the central, north west and south east sectors of Melbourne. This was followed up by phone calls to selected administrators and/or teachers. Having established personal contact, one or more visits were arranged to collect completed questionnaires, do a face-to-face follow up interview, collect any relevant documents and materials, and where possible to observe classes and to survey (and perhaps interview) NESB students. Care was taken to include the range of settings for such literacy and basic education activities, for example, TAFE, AMES Neighbourhood Houses, voluntary agencies, etc. In general, the research assistant was responsible for co-ordinating the transmission of the materials, undertaking the phone contact, and conducting some visits and interviews. Dr Rado carried out the majority of the visits and interviews.

7. Dr Rado, having linguistic and pedagogical expertise, undertook selected **observations** in educational settings to gather data, especially for the more technical sections of the report. (See, for example, Chapters 4 and 5 for Models of Implementation and Recommendations.)

8. Dr Rado, with limited assistance from Dr Foster, carried out an extensive program of **interviews** with a large number of informants (See Appendix 1), attendance at conferences, seminars and colloquia with Victoria, interstate and overseas experts in the fields of literacy, bilingualism and language methodology, and field work with specialised agencies, for example, the use of computer technology in the teaching of language and the workshop to share information on literacy and basic education courses conducted by voluntary and ethnic agencies.

9. A brief **questionnaire** was prepared by the principal investigators for **ethnic organizations**, especially women's units within them, to tap this resource. The questionnaire was mailed and follow-up phone interviews were conducted. The aim was to get some indication of whether literacy and/or language instruction is carried out by these organizations or at least supported by them and what ideas they had on issues and problems in this area for their women members.

10. A set of **draft recommendations** was compiled and one of the accompanying Models for implementation. These were circulated with a covering letter to a wide range of selected informants for **feed-back** (written and oral responses). A research assistant co-ordinated the posting of the materials, initial and follow up phone interviews, receipt of written responses and compilation of the responses. Dr Rado also assisted in this process. The principal investigators had the responsibility for analysing the responses and modifying these draft sections of the report in the light of the results.

Data Analysis

Data were collated and analysed according to the nature of the data and the purposes for which these data were collected.

(a) **Published and Unpublished Literature and Interviews**

The resulting data bank was used for the following purposes:

* to compile a comprehensive bibliography and an extensive collection of original and photocopied materials; and

* to identify and explain relevant issues, problems and needs pertinent to the topic and hence to form part of Chapter 1, Chapter 4, and Chapter 5 in the final report. These data were transformed to written form or held on tape. They were systematically read or listened to and information selected on the basis of particular themes or topics. The results from these sources also helped to shape the research instruments, the interview questions, and the selection of informants and numbers and kinds of observations made.

(b) **Survey Questionnaires**

Most of the survey questionnaires were designed partly to be self-administered and partly to be completed by the researcher during the face to face interview. In the case of the provincial and country respondents, the entire questionnaire was self-administered. Sections of the questionnaires were pre-coded for ease of computer treatment and analysis. Some questions, especially if they could be elaborated because they were discussed in interview, were less amenable to coding, tabulation and computer analysis. These more open-ended questions were read systematically and general patterns or specific quotes were noted. The computer analysis consisted of descriptive statistics to obtain frequencies and percentages of responses. These quantitative data of responses from administrators, teachers and students are referred to in Chapter 3 in the report. The more qualitative results were used in Chapter 4 and 5.

The questionnaires used to gather information from ethnic organizations and to get feedback on draft sections of the report were read systematically but the results were treated qualitatively.

(c) **Observations**

Observations of classes were made for a number of purposes: for example, to gain some idea of the range of ethnic groups the women came from, their characteristics such as age, competence in oral English, use of mother tongue, interactions between peers and between teachers and classes, teaching methodologies, content of courses, characteristics of different learning contexts and so on.

Where possible, the researcher was given the opportunity to hold group interviews with students out of class time and, in some cases, to work with small groups and interact on a one-to-one basis with students in classes. The results of these observations contributed to Chapters 4 and 5.

Conclusion

This project must be described as an **exploratory** study. The quantitative, ethnographic and other qualitative aspects are all limited in some way because of constraints on time, travel, personnel, etc. We assert, however, that the rationale is sound and that many growing points for further research are to be discerned. It is hoped that even such preliminary results will have practical implications, of advantage not only for ALBE providers but for their clients and potential clients, especially NESB women.

CHAPTER 3

BILINGUAL LITERACY: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The provision of adult English, literacy and basic education courses presents a very complex picture to any researcher. The structures involved are to be found at Federal and State governments levels and in the private sector. To identify actual involvement requires an unravelling of funding, administrative, staffing arrangements as well as an understanding of current philosophies, policies and priorities. To complicate the picture even further, many aspects of these structures and relations are in a state of flux and, in addition, whatever happens in the immigration, settlement and other areas has implications for language services.

The goal we set ourselves of trying to assemble a neat and detailed picture of certain kinds of adult education for NESB women proved to be somewhat elusive. As the project progressed, we came to accept that the constantly changing nature of our 'subject' meant that we should be satisfied with general outlines, deeper understandings of segments of the overall picture, and some grasp of potential changes or growing points which could be discerned at the end of 1990. This section of the report then cannot claim to be exhaustive. We hope that it will provide a reasonable summation of the dynamic and ever-unfolding story of adult education, especially for migrant Australians.

Review of Current Provisions for Adult Literacy and Related Areas and Some Glimpses of the Future

(a) **Federal Level**

According to Weeks (1990), in an address to the Australian Council on Adult Literacy Conference, few Departments: Employment, Education and Training, Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and Social Security, have an involvement in adult literacy education. For example, the DEET Labour Market Programs have literacy components with a focus on employment expectations. The programs are administered by DEET and implemented through a variety of government agencies including the Commonwealth Employment Service Network (CES). They are:

* The Adult Literacy Program (ALT) which provides $1.1 million annually to TAFE systems to offer basic education courses;

* The non-government adult education program (NGAEP) which provides $1.4 million annually to community providers for courses including adult basic education. These funds are usually administered through state and territory TAFE systems;

* The advanced English program for migrants (AEP) which has a funding allocation of about $3.7 million and is also administered through the TAFE system. This program concentrates on raising the language skill level to one sufficient for entrance into education and training courses or for the recognition of overseas vocational qualifications.

From 1990, these three programs have been combined to focus more sharply on vocational objectives and to form the vocationally oriented adult education and literacy program (VOAELP). Further, the Minister, John Dawkins, has decided to direct an additional $4.5 million of TAFE recurrent money to adult literacy programs and non-government adult education programs in 1991-1993. DEET is also responsible for the administration of a number of programs which do not have literacy as their prime objective but make a significant contribution to it. These programs include three major labour market programs, SkillShare (SS), the Australian Traineeship System (ATS), and Jobtrain (JT). Each of these programs provides funds and buys or sub-contracts a range of training initiatives; many of which include a significant component of adult basic education.

DEET has a particular interest in language and literacy training as part of an integrated vocational training package because communication is a basic entry level skill required of all workers. Another DEET initiative in the area of Literacy and Language training is the funding of a $180,850 grant under the National Communication Skills Project to the ACT Institute of TAFE for the development of generic communication skills modules to be included as part of industry-based courses. The largest single element of Commonwealth expenditure in the literacy/English language area is the AMEP. AMEP is located within DILGEA and spends nearly $75 million a year through agreements with the State and Territory governments which in turn use these resources to run adult migrant education services through the TAFE systems and colleges and some universities. DILGEA and DEET between them administer most of the Commonwealth funds devoted to adult literacy. The DSS, while not administering any projects specifically aimed at literacy needs in the workforce, is responsible for a range of courses and counselling aimed at improving communications ability of the unemployed.

Such a heavy investment by the Federal Government ensures that national priorities are prominently addressed. This has obvious benefits but as we found when talking to teachers dealing with NESB women, it may mean that some individuals or groups are excluded from the benefits Federal funding can bring because they do not meet the criteria set by Canberra. Whether this is a good or bad thing is, of course, open to interpretation.

(b) **State Level, Victoria**

A Division of Further Education, Ministry of Education Victoria document (1990(a):3-4) included the following information about provisions in Victoria and possible future changes. The Victorian Government is currently intending to develop comprehensive legislation on further education. The legislation will clarify (a) the existing administrative and advisory functions undertaken by the Division of Further Education (DFE); Ministerial Advisory Committee on Further Education (MACFE); Regional Councils of Further Education (RCFEs); Council of Adult Education (CAE); State Training Board (STB); Office of the State Training Board (OSTB); and Victorian Post Secondary Education Commission (VPSEC) and recommend any necessary changes to administrative and legislative frameworks.

> The Government recognises and supports the breadth and diversity of adult learning activities which characterise further education. Further education programs which provide access into training, retraining, higher education and employment are a priority. These contribute to both the economic requirement of a productive and flexible workforce and the social justice imperative to provide for adults who have been educationally disadvantaged. Basic education is literacy, numeracy, and technology, return to work and return to study courses, and the adult Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) program open up opportunities for vocational education and training and higher education. Award restructuring in many industries and occupations will create a demand for additional programs in these areas. Enrichment and personal development programs particularly those provided through neighbourhood houses and community learning centres can be a first step back to accredited learning or employment for many adults. Women make up the majority of adult learners who respond to local and informal learning environments, often after unsatisfactory educational experiences or a long absence from formal education . . . .
>
> Educational provision for adults in Victoria comprises higher education, vocational education and further education. Many post secondary institutions provide educational programs in two or three of these areas and pathways between them are being developed through a variety of cross-accreditation arrangements.
>
> Further education programs include:
>
> * opportunities for the acquisition of basic transferable language, mathematical skills and knowledge sought by adults. Courses and programs commonly associated with basic education are literacy, numeracy, English as a second language and compensatory education;

* adult participation in the VCE

* education for purposes of updating or acquiring skills and knowledge, including those relating to work, but excluding vocational courses and programs of the higher education and vocational education and training sectors.

This DFE Statement and Discussion Paper on Further Education (1990(a):27-29) is also useful for clarifying the current structures, roles and relationships among the organizations which have responsibility for advice, administration and provision in the further education sector in Victoria. The following represent the major players in the further education field.

VICTORIAN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

VPSEC is set up under the Post-Secondary Education Act 1978 and is nominally responsible for all post-secondary education in Victoria. Thus the Act covers the education of all persons beyond the compulsory age for school attendance. However in practice VPSEC has largely confined its responsibilities to administering and advising on the provision of higher education through Universities and Colleges of Advanced Education.

STATE TRAINING BOARD

The State Training Board is responsible for vocational education and training in Victoria. Through its executive and administrative arm, the Office of the State Training Board, the State Training Board administers an integrated state training system including TAFE Colleges, Industry Training Boards, Industry Training Centres, and industry-based vocational training activity. This system has been given legislative support through the Vocational Education and Training Act 1990.

DIVISION OF FURTHER EDUCATION

DFE is part of the Ministry of Education. It provides advice to the Minister and performs a range of statewide and regional administrative and support functions. At the statewide level DFE promotes and extends the delivery of further education through budget, policy, and planning co-ordination. In addition DFE provides administrative and support services for the planning and operations of Regional Councils of Further Education, and further education providers in the community.

MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON FURTHER EDUCATION

MACFE was created in September 1989 to complement the advisory role of the eleven Regional Councils. In addition to representation from the eleven regions and the Chairperson appointed by the Minister, MACFE has twelve members chosen for their statewide perspectives and/or their capacity to represent the interest of special interest groups. The primary purpose of this 22 member committee is to advise the Minister on statewide further education policies and strategies.

REGIONAL COUNCILS OF FURTHER EDUCATION

Each of the eleven further education regions has a Council consisting of twelve members appointed by the Minister. Each council has responsibility for developing policy advice and improving further education delivery within its region. Each council contributes to the development of statewide policy priorities. Regional Councils develop recommendations on regional allocations of grants to providers by taking into account factors such as total funds available, number of providers seeking funds, programs offered, Government policy, and regional further education priorities. Regional Councils currently do not have the power to allocate funds to providers but their advice on allocations invariably has been accepted by the Minister.

COUNCIL OF ADULT EDUCATION

CAE is a statutory authority established under the Council of Adult Education Act 1981 with wide responsibilities to support the development of adult learning in Victoria through policy advice, planning, and provision of adult education in Victoria. CAE delivers an extensive educational program based mainly in the metropolitan area, and a wide range of services to other providers. The program includes ESL, literacy, basic education, VCE, languages, liberal arts, creative arts, business studies, fitness, health, nutrition, leisure and recreation, and women's studies. The CAE has a direct reporting relationship to the Parliament through the Minister and nominates a representative to MACFE.

ADULT MIGRANT EDUCATION SERVICES

AMES provides English language programs for adult migrants from non-English speaking background at Adult Migrant Centres, community locations, and workplaces. AMES is funded by the Commonwealth Government according to Commonwealth Government guidelines but is directly accountable to the Ministry of Education through DFE. 524 staff operate from a range of program delivery points including 14 major teaching centres. AMES advice to the DFE on policy development is based on its primary focus as a provider of further education.

COLLEGES OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

TAFE Colleges provide a substantial proportion of further education courses, and funding for this provision is currently administered by the Office of the State Training Board in accordance with performance plans negotiated by the Division of Further Education with each College. Most of the 33 Colleges are providers of further education programs including adult literacy and basic education, VCE for adults, ESL, bridging and preparatory courses. In addition Colleges provide fee for service further education short courses.

COMMUNITY PROVIDERS

About 700 smaller providers of further education receive Government funding through DFE and Regional Councils. Many have multiple funding sources including State and Commonwealth budgets, Local Government, and user-pays programs. Community providers is a term used to cover neighbourhood houses, community learning centres, and Local Advisory Committees (LACs). Local Advisory Committees are community providers which have negotiated a special advisory and reporting relationship with CAE under Section 16 of the Council of Adult Education Act 1981.

Non-profit making community providers are managed by local Committees of Management. Smaller providers also include a diverse range of organisations such as libraries whose main focus is not further education, but whose goals are partially met through educational programs.

OTHER PROVIDERS

Many Universities and Colleges of Advanced Education provide extension or continuing education, based on particular areas of teaching expertise and generally paid for directly by users. In addition large scale opportunities exist for further, adult and continuing education through the activities of political lobby groups, political parties, churches, unions, many Government agencies (such as museums), private enterprise, and organisations such as the University of the Third Age.

Once the community and other providers are added in, the extent of the network begins to be revealed. Some of the practical problems to which our informants alluded such as the abundance of forms to complete to apply for funds, to detail proposed new courses, to report on evaluations of existing courses, etc., become apparent.

One of our informants provided us with a schematic representation of the provisions for ESL and Adult Literacy in Victoria, indicating that links to the Federal level (See Figure 3.1). It is instructive that some of the links are somewhat ambiguously defined.

(c) **Potential Changes**

One of the latest government reports with significant potential to affect literacy and language education and training, was released in December 1990. This was the DEET Green Paper entitled ***The Language of Australia***. The media release which accompanied the launching of the Paper spoke of the Federal Government's 'full scale attack on Australia's literacy and language problems' and foreshadowed 'radical changes to the nation's literacy and foreign language policies and priorities'.

The Green Paper's main proposals include:

* the creation of Community Literacy and Language Services which could link available literacy and foreign language providers and services delivered by governments, education institutions and community centres through a single, accessible agency. The Services could provide information and referral advice and offer curriculum and training packages for industry, community and education agencies. It could organise community language programs and publicise available learning resources;

* the delivery of literacy education and foreign language programs, especially for adults, through the downtime on either the ABC or SBS television networks;

* boosting adult English literacy education in the Australian workplace;

* funding through the Federal Government's SkillShare training program for unemployed people of basic education in literacy;

* support for State Governments in their efforts to improve literacy in schools. The Paper proposes a new emphasis on monitoring both literacy among school students and the outcomes of programs in schools. The aim of such monitoring would be to strengthen the performance of these programs;

* establishment of an authoritative national body to advise on the use of Australian English, taking into account the changing nature of Australian English as a living language;

* the creation of a new foreign language program in schools...;

* investigation of implementing high quality distance education language programs;

* setting as a national priority for universities between 1992-95 the supply of foreign language teachers;

* support maintenance of 20 or so actively transmitted Aboriginal languages and the establishment of a network of regional Aboriginal language centres; and

* research, retrieval and recording of Aboriginal languages.

(Media Release, December 1990:2-3).

The suggestion of a nationwide network of Community Literacy and Language Services has implications for (I) bringing into closer relationship existing literacy and LOTE(S) services, (II) legitimating bilingualism in the Australian context, (III) putting greater pressure on industry, and community formal education agencies to share the responsibility for language education and

training in Australia. Some may suggest that by further centralising education and training, these activities will become over-controlled with consequent loss of flexibility to respond to 'local' circumstances. The Green Paper must be followed by a White Paper to activate government policy. We can monitor the community response to the Green Paper in 1991.

Results and Discussion: Survey Questionnaires

Questionnaires were completed by organisers, teachers and students associated with adult literacy and basic education organizations and programs or courses. For teachers and organizers, the questionnaire was self-administered. In the case of respondents in Melbourne, there was generally an opportunity for discussion in a face-to-face interview. This was not possible for those in the country although some extra contact was derived from phone conversations. In addition, we conducted unstructured interviews with individuals who had influence in the ALBE field and with industry representatives.

Contacts were made with the following organizations:

TAFE: Box Hill; Broadmeadows; Collingwood; Dandenong; Flagstaff; Footscray; Geelong; Holmesglen; Melbourne College of Textiles; Myrtleford; Newport; Prahran; Preston; Shepparton; Sunraysia; Wangaratta; Warrnambool; Yallourn.

AMES: Ashburton Library; Broadmeadows; Brunswick; Clayton; Distance Learning; Enterprise; Home Tutor Scheme; Mitcham; Moreland High; Myer House; Swan Hill; Wodonga.

CAE: Caulfield; Deer Park; Flinders Street.

DFE: Central Highlands; Central Metropolitan; Eastern Metropolitan; Gippsland; Northern Metropolitan; Rialto Towers; Western Metropolitan; Wimmera.

Centres: Altona North; Box Hill TAFE; Brunswick Community Project; Collingwood Migrant Women's Learning Centre; Donvale Living and Learning Centre; East Geelong Learning Centre; Footscray Migrant Resource Centre; Footscray Women's Learning Centre; Geelong Ethnic Communities Council and Migrant Resource Centre; Horsham; Lalor Living and Learning Centre; Northern Metropolitan TAFE; Wonthaggi.

Neighbourhood Houses:
Brunswick; Coburg; East Coburg; Flemington; Hartnett; Melbourne City Mission.

Community Health Service:
Kiewa Ovens Valley Hospital; Mercy Hospital, Melbourne; Repatriation General Hospital, Heidelberg.

Tertiary: Footscray Institute of Technology; La Trobe University; RMIT; Western Institute.

Workcare: Department of Labour, Dandenong.

DILGEA: Box Hill; City; Dandenong South.

SkillShare: Employment 2000; Richmond.

Employers: Department of Veterans Affairs; Administration, Victoria; Toyota; North Altona and Port Melbourne; Rockwell Ass. Australia; Engineering; Metal Trades Industry Association; Port of Melbourne Authority.

STB (State Training Board):
Rialto Towers.

Other: Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council (VALBEC); Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU); Victorian Trades Hall Council; Victorian Ethnic Communities Council; Fitzroy Learning Network; City of Collingwood Human Services Department; Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) Melbourne; Language Testing Centre, the University of Melbourne.

Libraries: State Library of NSW; Moonee Valley Regional Library Service; National Library, Canberra.

The findings reported here are based on the structured interviews. As the computed tables were simple frequencies and percentages, the results are given in the body of the text. The full set of printouts is available from the authors.

1. Organizers

Although the results reported here are based on the survey questionnaire responses, we also conducted a number of unstructured interviews with organisers. The information gained in this way is reflected in Chapters 4 and 5.

1.1 Background Information

Twenty-seven organizers completed the survey questionnaire. All were women, with the exception of two men. The majority of them were between the ages of 31 and 50 years; only one was in the 21-30 age group and four were over 50 years of age. The organizers were associated with Living and Learning Centres, the Division of Further Education, tertiary institutions, AMES, country areas, Adult Literacy Programs, Neighbourhood Houses and a City Mission. All except three were Australian born, one each was born in the Philippines, Scotland and England. Of those who were born in Australia, all received their primary and secondary education here. Twenty-two of the twenty-four also had acquired tertiary qualifications in Australia. The overseas born had received their education, including tertiary, overseas. For two organizers, their highest educational qualification was secondary schooling; all the others had some form of tertiary qualification. Sixteen (59 per cent) had teaching experience prior to their present position; a further 30 per cent indicated that they did not have specific qualification/experience to prepare them for their present employment. Twenty-one (or 78 per cent) had substantial experience (minimum 6 years) of their current work.

Just over half of the organizers (14) had no literacy skills in a language other than English (LOTE). Of those who did, languages mentioned (in order of frequency) were French, Italian and Spanish, German, Filipino, Greek, Gaelic and Hokkien. It is perhaps not surprising that 10 (37 per cent) of the organizers reported using LOTE rarely in everyday life and a further 13 (48 per cent) said the question was not applicable to them; only 4 (15 per cent) organizers used LOTE professionally.

1.2 Information on Students

Organizers were asked which language groups were catered for in their classes. Indo-Chinese and other Asian groups were mentioned most frequently after European and Spanish. Other language groups noted less frequently were Chinese, African, and 'other'.

In answer to the question 'which students are you aiming for in your courses?' the most frequently used response was predictably 'those needing to improve English skills', followed by 'those students who have been in Australia less than three years' (22 per cent). There was some mention of those with 'little literacy in English and own language' and those wanting 'to enter the workforce'.

Recruitment of students was of interest to us. Word of mouth, referral and advertising were the

most frequently mentioned methods. It was striking that when organizers were asked if there were groups in the community their courses were **not** reaching, 82 per cent answered in the affirmative. They specified those resident more than 5 years, young mothers, those needing to work, those with lack of access as the main groups. Child care, cultural expectations and lack of access to publicity were singled out as inhibiting factors to access and participation. We asked for suggestions on how groups could be reached. Responses included more specific targeting, links with government agencies, and more child care. When asked if any student funding was provided, less than half the respondents said 'yes'. Bilingual support for students was available to less than 50 per cent of cases (41 per cent). When asked about any other forms of support which should be available to female students, organizers mentioned child care, multicultural information (e.g., medical), support/discussion groups and bilingual social workers.

Organizers were asked if they differentiated between males and females in their courses; the majority response (74 per cent) was 'no'. We asked if there were specific areas where female students' learning needs should be approached in a particular way. There was a less than 50 per cent response and the points mentioned were course content, confidence building and cultural background.

1.3 Information on Staff

The locations we surveyed, according to organizers, were staffed overwhelmingly by women (90 per cent women). Approximately two-thirds of the women worked full time compared with more than 80 per cent of the men. Organizers indicated that only one third of their staff spoke LOTE and the most frequently mentioned languages were Greek, Italian, Spanish and French.

Thirty-seven per cent of organizers suggested that present provisions for teacher development are poor in contrast to 15 per cent stating adequate and 18 per cent each for good and very good. Fifty-nine per cent said that they had suggestions for further professional development activities and suggested short term literacy courses, curriculum development, practical resources and second language acquisition.

1.4 Information on Courses

The bulk of courses mentioned were short courses, that is, three months or less although there were some year long courses. Courses included:

> Vocational English, English for Training and Study, Literacy and Writing for Engineers, Job Search (Youth training program), Migrant Access, Education Program, Child Care Studies, Job Skills Course, Everyday Reading, Writing and Spelling, English conversation, Assertiveness for Women, New Directions for Women, English for migrant hairdressers, High oracy/low literacy English, Distance learning, and Health for Women.

Organization/development of courses was reported to be the main job of teachers in 56 per cent of cases and organizers in 41 per cent of cases. Organizers suggested that their input into course development could be rated as a lot (52 per cent) or adequate (41 per cent). Evaluation of courses was done mainly by written reports, informal comments between teachers and students and by reports to the State Training Board.

In answer to how courses are funded, major funding was reported as coming from State (48 per cent) and Federal (44 per cent) governments, with some mention of special grants (30 per cent). We were interested to know if any courses had been discontinued since 1988. There was an affirmative response of 37 per cent. In response to the question, why were courses discontinued, the major reasons were lack of interest and lack of staff, not as we might have thought, lack of funding. The latter emerged more as an issue in unstructured interviews and in responses to our draft recommendations.

It was reported that about one third of courses had pre-requisites. The great majority of organizers (85 per cent) reported that courses were run both during the day and at night, but that, in their view, women do have problems with the times that courses are available.

Fifty-five per cent of organizers said that they were very satisfied or satisfied about the methodology available in their courses or at least felt that it was adequate. Eleven per cent registered dissatisfaction. A similar response was obtained to the question about satisfaction with course materials except that the dissatisfaction level was higher (22 per cent). Asked about issues addressed in their courses, organizers most frequently identified the following: living skills/self esteem, job skills/return to work and English proficiency/literacy. Others noted were settlement needs of newly arrived migrants, preparing to go on to further study, special courses for targeted groups.

1.5 Information on Administrators' Concerns

In regard to amount of autonomy, 96 per cent of organizers reported 'a lot' or 'adequate'. Problems faced by administrators were identified as: funding (57 per cent), staff (18 per cent), equipment (22 per cent), government regulations (11 per cent), the community (15 per cent). Organizers, at this stage, did not suggest any further issues or problems which should be addressed.

2. *Teachers*

2.1 Background Information

Thirty-nine teachers from the same agencies as the organizers completed questionnaires for the study. The overwhelming proportion (36 or 92 per cent) were women. The bulk were aged between 31 and 50 years; only one below 31 and 4 older than 50. Two-thirds of the teachers were Australian born. Of the 13 not born in Australia, countries of birth included Poland, Italy, Lebanon, France, Canada, the Netherlands (one born in each), two persons came from the USA and five from the United Kingdom. Of the overseas born, six had arrived in Australia in the 1980s, the remainder prior to 1979, going back to three in the 1950s. Only 19 per cent had received their secondary education and 10 per cent their tertiary education overseas; the majority of the remainder (72 per cent secondary and 69 per cent tertiary) had received their education in Australia. More than 90 per cent of the teachers had tertiary qualifications ranging from Certificate to Doctorate level; the majority (67 per cent) held either a Diploma or a Bachelor's degree. Seventy-two per cent of the teachers had previous teaching experience; the remainder had experience in 'other' activities. This was a group with extensive time in their present work; 59 per cent had spent six years or more and a further 26 per cent between three and five years in this kind of literacy and/or ESL related teaching.

Seventy-two per cent of the teachers indicated literacy in LOTE. The languages identified were Korean, Polish, Spanish, French, Italian, Arabic, Filipino, German, Indonesian, Dutch and Greek. One teacher also noted some oral skill in Arabic. Twenty-five per cent of the teachers reported use of LOTE in everyday life 'often' or 'sometimes'; for 41 per cent the question was not relevant. With respect to use of LOTE professionally, 28 per cent replied 'often' or 'sometimes' and a further 23 per cent 'rarely'.

2.2 Information on Students

Teachers noted that their classes catered most frequently for the following language groups: Indo-Chinese, Chinese, Other Asian, European and Spanish. Teachers were concerned that some groups are not being reached (64 per cent responded in the affirmative). Women with families, those unaware of options, and the elderly were identified and lack of access to information, child care, and social/cultural reasons were mentioned as causes for lack of access and participation. More recreation and child care services and more women only classes were mentioned most frequently as solutions.

Teachers were asked if they had sufficient information about their students in order to work effectively with them and the great majority (90 per cent) said that this was so. Fifty-four per cent indicated that there was bilingual support for students. With respect to other support which would be useful, child care facilities topped the list, followed by women only classes. In response to whether it mattered if male and female students are together in classes, however, only one-third responded 'yes'. On the question of approaching female students' learning in particular ways, teachers most frequently mentioned health issues, confidence building and sensitivity to family relationships. Forty-one per cent of teachers said that they differentiated between male and female students.

2.3 Information on Courses

Almost 70 per cent of teachers indicated that they taught courses of duration 6 months or less. The remainder reported teaching year long courses. The main foci of such courses were reported as speaking, reading, writing, communication and everyday life. Teachers considered that they had a lot of input into the development of courses (87 per cent) and they noted overwhelmingly (97 per cent) that students also had an input. Student input was mainly negotiation of particular topics, expression of their needs and recommendations/ideas.

Evaluation of courses was carried out mainly by informal teacher reports, formal student testing, informal student reports and discussion. Fifty-four per cent of teachers indicated that their courses were held in the day and evening and about one-third suggested that women have problems with the times that courses are available. Asked if they were satisfied with the methodology in their area, 44 per cent commented that they were satisfied and 28 per cent that it was adequate. A further 18 per cent were very satisfied. The majority of teachers (82 per cent) also were satisfied with the resource materials available to them, although one-third rated them only as adequate. Again, most of the teachers were happy with the facilities provided for their classes although about a third rated them only as adequate.

2.4 Information on Teacher Concerns

When asked about autonomy, almost everyone considered they had a lot or that it was adequate. There was less unanimity over present provisions for teacher development. More than half saw them as good or adequate; 23 per cent saw them as very good and 20 per cent as poor. Thirty-eight per cent of teachers indicated that they could suggest ideas for further professional development.

Teachers' perceptions of the problems they face included lack of time (61 per cent) and then, in order, facilities (27 per cent), other (23 per cent), lack of support (18 per cent) and equipment (10 per cent).

Comparisons: Organisers and Teachers

We thought it would be useful to compare, in general terms, what organizers and teachers had written in the survey. We compared, (a) background information, (b) information on students, (c) information on courses, and (d) concerns.

(a) It was clear that organizers and teachers had some strong similarities; sex, age, country of birth, Australian education and substantial experience in their present employment. Differences arose in amount and nature of tertiary qualifications and LOTE skills. Teachers had a higher profile in both of these areas and tended also to have rather more teaching experience prior to the present position.

(b) Organizers mentioned a couple more language groups than teachers (i.e., European and African). Teachers seem to face, in practice, largely mixed language groups and this is the more salient feature for them. Organizers are even more concerned than teachers about the extent to which language needs are being serviced. It was interesting that teachers and organizers identify different groups which may be 'missing out'. Combining the two sets of responses we note the following groups - the longer resident and the elderly, on the one hand, and the newly arrived, on the other; women with family responsibilities and isolated women, (e.g., by location - country towns or by lack of knowledge/and or confidence). Those working in the field place lack of child care very prominently as a barrier to women's participation. It seems that governments still do not understand the division of labour in contemporary families! Bilingual support, even given all the rhetoric of the Multicultural Agenda and the National Policy on Languages, is not yet freely available according to these knowledgeable professionals. Practitioners in classrooms did indicate some differentiation in their treatment of male and female students. Teachers and administrators could identify legitimate areas for gender sensitivity and ethnic awareness in subject matter and interpersonal relations.

(c) The emphasis seemed to be on short courses although some teachers indicated they were teaching year long courses. Teachers perceived their role in course development as greater than that attributed to them by organizers and also acknowledged the input of students. Teachers and organizers generally concurred on forms of evaluation. There seemed to be some discrepancy between organizers and teachers over just when courses are run (short or longer, day or evening) but both groups suggested that some women had problems with the times. Teachers, perhaps because of their active role in classes, expressed more satisfaction with methodology and resources than organizers.

(d) Teachers and administrators, as might be expected, expressed different concerns. The top of the list for administrators was funding while for teachers it was lack of time, both for preparation and for time in classes with students. Governments are still unwilling (or unable) to realise (and to fund accordingly) that language learning to achieve a reasonable degree of competence requires extensive tuition and practice.

In an effort to obtain as much practical advice as possible from those actively engaged in the field, we provided opportunities in the questionnaire for 'open-ended' questions. Regarding **problems** the following reflect some of the ideas of organizers and teachers.

(i) *Organizers*

- Unrealistic expectations of language gains in AMEP courses - "the time is too short";
- Small isolated communities bring problems of limited pool of clients and staff;
- Pressure to be entrepreneurial - to offer self-funded courses;
- Inadequate funding to support infrastructure required, e.g., clerical support - cannot meet social justice needs;
- Complexity of funding sources and associated paperwork;
- Inadequate salaries and conditions for many workers in the adult literacy area;

Country organisers commented in particular on:

- the need for tutor or training programs in ESL and regular visits by AMES specialists;
- Training for Koori English;
- 'Shoestring' funding and problems in using volunteers;
- Lack of staff to meet demand; and
- Many teachers are volunteers and need more help.

(ii) *Teachers*

- Lack of suitable text books/materials;
- Students' intermittent attendance;
- More time for preparation;
- Lack of time with students;
- Older students have different needs from younger women, especially those with children;
- The problem of excluding those not making a direct contribution to the paid workforce;
- Ethnic groups keeping to themselves, e.g., Spanish in Wangaratta; and
- Some classes too big, e.g. Enterprise hostel or too small, e.g., in the country.

Country teachers had similar suggestions to those from country organizers:

- Provision of conferences for country providers;
- Regular visits by AMES specialists;
- More training for Home Tutors;
- Special provision for one to one tuition to safeguard anonymity; and
- Koori culture should be addressed in country courses.

3. *Students (A): General Questionnaire*

The first questionnaire was directed at mixed classes, that is, in which male students were enrolled in addition to women and to students with a reasonable competence in English. Sixty-three responses were obtained, of which 13 came from men and 50 from women. These classes were located in AMES, an English in the Workplace Program, a Tertiary setting and a Neighbourhood House. As we are focussing on women only, the data to be commented on were re-computed for the women only and these are the results being reported. A little more than a third of women were in AMES courses, with roughly equal numbers to be found in the other locations.

3.1 Background Information

Fifty-eight per cent of the (50) women were between the ages of 20 and 40 and 18 per cent were over 51. The majority (82 per cent) were married, only 10 per cent never having been married. Seventy-four per cent had children, ranging from one to seven in number. Forty-two per cent had children up to 20 years old, a further 24 per cent had children in the age range 21 to 30 years old. All the women were overseas born. Thirty per cent identified themselves as being of Indo-Chinese, Chinese or other Asian birth while 48 per cent were from European countries. The remainder mentioned African or Spanish countries of birth. Forty-six per cent had come to Australia in the past five years; of the others 10 per cent came in the 1950s, 12 per cent in the 1960s, and the final 20 per cent between 1970 and 1984.

Vietnamese and Italian were the major literacy languages other than English known. Other languages included Thai, Serbo-Croation, Macedonian, Chinese, Polish, French, Greek, Japanese, Arabic, Filipino, Indonesian, Turkish. The major LOTE spoken in everyday life were Vietnamese and Chinese and then Polish and Spanish.

We probed language use further by asking which language they mainly spoke with husband, children, etc. Most of the women spoke their ethnic language with their husbands and children although there was more English spoken with children. The same pattern as for children applied to language use with other family members and there was mixed language use (even more English) with friends.

The education history was fairly predictable; 92 per cent had overseas primary education, 65 per cent overseas secondary education and only 26 per cent overseas tertiary education. Little education at any level had been taken in Australia or combined Australian and overseas. About thirty per cent had no secondary education and 60 per cent no tertiary education. Almost one-third of the women were not in paid work because of home duties and about fifty-four per cent were in the labour force. Eighteen per cent only were in professional jobs (nurse, computer analyst and teacher). Of the others, one was a hairdresser and the remainder were in unskilled or semi-skilled work including press operator, process worker, shop assistant. Vietnamese and Chinese were reported as being spoken in the workplace but English was by far the most common language (48

per cent); 18 per cent reported that no English was spoken at their workplace. Twenty-six per cent said that they were given time off to go to English classes and, 36 per cent said that they were not.

The educational background for husbands/partners indicated that most of their education had occurred overseas and that there was little difference between males and females except that more males had some education in Australia. Few women were able to say how much schooling their husbands/partners had had in Australia. Most husbands/partners were in full time work; only 16 per cent were enrolled in a course at the time of the survey.

3.2 Course

Students were asked about the courses in which they were enrolled. More than half (56 per cent) described the course as an English course. Other kinds of courses were literacy, communication, advanced writing, intermediate English writing and summer TAFE courses. Sixty-four per cent were in courses of three or six months duration; 20 per cent were in year length courses. Fifty-two per cent had done at least one other course in Australia. Just over half attended day classes currently and the remainder were in evening classes. The majority (82 per cent) did not have problems with class times and almost all of them (96 per cent) had been able to get into the course of their first preference. Few had another course in mind if held at the same time (only 18 per cent). Most had found out about the course in which they were enrolled from friends (32 per cent), work (20 per cent) and newspapers (16 per cent). The decision to take the particular course was prompted primarily by a desire to improve their English (66 per cent) or because it was appropriate to their needs (14 per cent). More than half (54 per cent) did not have any advice on choice of courses. Most (92 per cent) said that being a female had not affected their choice of course, and similarly, they were not concerned about males and females being together in classes nor whether the teachers was male. The great majority (94 per cent) expressed satisfaction with their course so far. They mentioned supportive teachers, interesting subject, relevant material, happy with results and right time as significant contributors to their satisfaction. The very small amount of dissatisfaction was put down to difficulty in understanding and slow progress.

3.3 Issues and Concerns

Students were asked about the degree of support they received from husband/partner. Fifty-two per cent reported 'a lot' or 'an adequate amount'; 22 per cent responded 'not much'. Children were seen as being more supportive (28 per cent gave 'a lot' of support) and 10 per cent 'not much'. Twelve per cent only said their studies were a source of disagreement at home. Few suggested any other support which would be helpful and few said that being female created problems for them in the course.

Twenty-six per cent indicated that child care facilities were available for the course, but 50 per cent said they were not. However, 78 per cent said they did not use them anyway. Availability of such facilities was not of concern to 80 per cent of the students. With respect to bilingual support, 70 per cent said that there was none. The majority (90 per cent) did not consider that it was difficult to work with/get close to students from different ethnic backgrounds. Only 34 per cent preferred to work with students of the same ethnic background as their own.

4. Students (B): "I am a Woman" Questionnaire

The second questionnaire, 'I am a woman', was used in women only classes, especially where there was not a high level of English competence. Dr Rado used the questionnaire, partly to stimulate interaction between herself and students during observations and in order to gauge difficulties individuals were having with English. The format has been simplified, with fewer open-ended questions. Seventy-seven women completed this questionnaire. They were located in settings such as AMES community programs in the city and in various literacy and basic education courses in country areas.

4.1 Background Information

About one-third were from Asian background, one-third European, and the remainder from a variety of countries. Approximately half were under and half over 40 years of age (with about 17 per cent over 51 and about 15 per cent 25 and under). Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Greek had the most speakers but other languages spoken included Portuguese, German, Serbian, Lebanese, Italian, Greek, Tagalog, Mandarin, Tamil, Fijian, Thai, Polish, Arabic, Khmer, Hindi, Hungarian and Macedonian. Seventy-two per cent had arrived in Australia since 1980 and, in fact, 48 per cent since 1987; a significant proportion being 'new arrivals'. Eighty-three per cent were or had been married; only 15 per cent were single. Twenty per cent were childless. Numbers of children ranged from one to seven, two was the most frequent number. Fifty-five per cent had children 20 years old and younger and other third had offspring between 21 and 30 years. Seventy-eight per cent came from urban areas in their own countries and a further 20 per cent from a village - only one person came from an actual farm.

4.2 Education and Work

Ninety-seven per cent had gone to school in their home countries. Only 8 per cent had been to school for less than 4 years and a further 17 per cent had full primary. Sixty-five per cent had full secondary education, but only 9 per cent had tertiary qualifications. Only 15 per cent had some schooling in Australia, mainly less than one year. The great majority said they had had English classes in Australia. Fifty-four per cent had had a job in their home country. The most frequently mentioned jobs were self-employed, nurse, dressmaker and accounts clerk. Other jobs included secretary, hairdresser, teacher, shop assistant, farmer, machinist, cook, school assistant, housewife and physiotherapist. In Australia, the most frequently mentioned job, other than housewife, was machinist/process worker.

Of their husbands/partners, the women reported that 76 per cent had gone to school in their home country; 18 per cent had primary education only, about 60 per cent had secondary education, 19 per cent had some post-secondary education. Nineteen per cent were reported as having had some schooling in Australia, although most women did **not** reply to this question. Most commonly mentioned jobs in the home country were labourer, factory worker, teacher or self-employed. Other jobs included machinist, draftsman, waiter, pensioner, motor mechanic, inspector, chef, taxi driver, electrician, accountant, engineer, office worker, student, computer operator, carpenter, farmer, sailor, manager, banking, laboratory assistant and unemployed. In Australia, the first job was usually as a factory worker and the current job factory worker, own business and student (together 29 per cent). Of those who replied 23 per cent said husbands/partners did not have a job currently and 23 per cent were learning English.

4.3 Language Background

We asked about use of the ethnic language. In order of frequency from most to least the women communicated in the ethnic language with friends, relatives, children, husband/partner, ethnic club, in prayer, shops, work, doctor and office. Eighty-seven per cent indicated that they could read their language very well or well; 90 per cent could write their language very well or well. Of those who answered, forty-eight per cent said that husband/partners know English very well or well. Sixty per cent of women reported that their husbands wanted them to learn English; there was an even higher percentage of children (81 per cent) and relatives (81 per cent)

4.4 English Language Needs

We asked whether the women needed to **read** English for a whole range of activities. Affirmative responses in order of expressed need were:

- finding important information;
- reading newspapers and filling in forms;
- reading letters, magazines, reading radio or TV guides;
- reading notices at work;
- looking for a job;
- shopping;
- looking up a street directory; and
- finding a telephone number.

Written English was required for:

- filling in a form;
- getting some information;
- sending a letter, applying for a job, and leaving a message
- sending an invitation;

- making a complaint, passing on message;
- remembering what I have learnt;
- paying bills by mail;
- telling someone what to do;
- replying to an invitation, sending a note to my child's school;
- planning things, remembering what I have done; and
- remembering what has happened.

Fifty-eight per cent of the women expressed a wish to learn to use the computer and 30 per cent were already learning how to use the computer. English classes were seen as a way to help to get a job (53 per cent) or a better job (11 per cent); only 5 per cent suggested that it might help them to be 'better at my job'.

Knowing English as a way of becoming independent from others was seen as most important for independence from family (66 per cent), friends (58 per cent) and people who speak 'my language' (52 per cent).

4.5 The Current English Class

Nine per cent were enrolled in AMES, 13 per cent in a country area, 44 per cent were enrolled in migrant women's classes, and 15 per cent in TAFE. Other locations included home (4 per cent) and a Learning Centre (2 per cent). Just under half of the women found the course too short; 43 per cent thought it long enough. For 38 per cent, it was their first English class. Eighty-one per cent found the course 'just right' in terms of difficulty. Sixty-one per cent attended class in the morning and the great majority (more than 90 per cent) thought the time was a good one for them. Eighty-one per cent wanted to do another course after this one. Sixty-three per cent saw it as better to learn in a women's class but only about one-third said they thought it better to learn in a class with others who spoke their language and a little more than one-third supported the idea of a teacher who knew the same language as themselves. Two-thirds preferred a woman teacher and fewer (43 per cent) agreed that it was 'alright if the teacher is a man'. Fifty-one per cent said it really did not matter.

Problems about attending class were ranked as follows: feeling depressed (23 per cent), transport (20 per cent), health problems (15 per cent), job (11 per cent), sick children, housework (10 per cent), family problems (8 per cent), and child care (6 per cent).

Difficulties with English language were ranked: pronunciation (82 per cent), spelling (77 per cent), writing sentences (71 per cent), remembering new words (68 per cent), use of tense (67 per cent), where to put words in sentences (66 per cent), and handwriting (42 per cent). Other difficulties include how people think in Australia (59 per cent), how to prepare for a job (61 per cent) and what is happening in the world (57 per cent).

The women were asked why their English class is important. The major reason given was that 'learning English makes me feel better' (85 per cent). Two other reasons were that the women in the class 'help me' (51 per cent) and 'I need other migrant women' (38 per cent).

Comparisons: Students A and B

Again, we thought it interesting to make some simple comparisons.

The age profile for the B group included slightly more in the over 40 group (about 50 per cent) than in the A group (about 42 per cent). They had similar profiles regarding marital status and children. All of the women were overseas born. Major birthplace countries were similar, but Group B had greater diversity of ethnic background.

We obtained more detailed language use data from Group B and there seemed to be some interesting differences. Group B used their ethnic language with friends, relatives and children more than with husbands or partners. This was the reverse of the pattern for Group A.

Group A were more highly educated than Group B in that twice as many had achieved tertiary qualifications. The two groups were similar in that little education had been undertaken in Australia. The education levels were reflected in the labour force participation. Only in group A did we find a representation in the professional level (albeit only 18 per cent). Of the Group B women in the workforce, most of them were in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs and in process or machinist work. It seems, given the spread of jobs undertaken in the home countries, that the experience of migration for many women had the effect of limiting choices and may even result in de-skilling. This should not be overemphasised because stage of life cycle is an important factor in women's labour force participation, whether migrant or not, and these limited results seem to indicate also a narrowing of employment experience for male migrants. For Group B, the differences between educational levels for males and females were more accentuated than for Group A. Group A females were more nearly equal in achievement with their husbands/partners. The husbands/partners of Group B women were more likely to be experiencing unemployment (and enrolling in English classes) than those for Group A.

More of the Group B women attended English classes during the day. Surprisingly perhaps neither group expressed severe problems in accessing and participating in classes. The issue of being a woman was not very salient for either group, although there was some support for being in a women only class within Group B. An ethno-specific environment did not appear to be a major desire for these women. Both groups expressed considerable positive feeling about their English language learning class experience.

It is not possible to make strict comparisons between the groups because of the simplified format for Group B. There does seem to be some sense of similarity, however, in the support the women received for attendance at courses. One gets the sense that husbands/partners are not necessarily highly supportive; children, other relatives and friends are likely to be more positive. Given that both of these groups did not rate child care as a severe problem (and obviously many of them were beyond the stage of needing it), perhaps spouse/partner attitude is more significant (and also more difficult to overcome).

We provided opportunities in both questionnaires to students to suggest what migrant women in general want from language, literacy, basic education courses. Below is a selection of their responses. The desire for competence in English is strongly stated. There is a keen sense of what this added skill will mean to their successful settlement in Australia.

- "To work or to study to adapt to the new environment and to be successful in life. Also, they want to have a position in the society, so that life will be useful and meaningful."

- "More different and useful courses for them to feel confident to fit in this English speaking country. Often they need their children taking care by somebody during they go to school. But the most important thing that is they need their husband to support them."

- "Survival - in terms of going to the bank - need to become an advocate for myself - on my own."

- "Wants books, homework, prepare women for life in the community, not just English, more information on courses available for people who want to be teachers."

- "self-confidence, career, good speak English".

- "more English, good enough to get car licence".

Results and Discussion: Contacts with Government and Community Organisations

A number of government related/associated and community organisations were approached, by letter in the first instance and with a follow-up phone call, to explore their views on literacy needs of NESB women. Examples of government related/associated organizations included the Port of Melbourne Authority, Hospital Employees' Federation No 1 Branch, the Commonwealth Employment Service, the Trades Hall Council, the Department of Labour, the Victorian Ethnic

Affairs Commission. The community based organisations included the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia and the Victorian Ethnic Communities' Council, the Women's Electoral Lobby and a variety of ethno-specific groups including the Arabic Speaking Women's Group, the Cambodian Association of Victoria, the Chilean Club of Victoria, Australian Muslim Women's Association, Polish Community Council of Victoria, Turkish Women's Association of Victoria and the Australian Vietnamese Women's Welfare Association. The response, especially from the ethnic (women's) associations, was not extensive. It is clear in this latter case that bilingual personnel who could interview face-to-face or by phone would have improved the response rate. The limits on funds and time did not allow this kind of methodology to be implemented. Only a brief review of key features of some of the responses will be given. There is no question of 'representativeness' being attributed to these results.

Union Organisations

The information received indicated that unions are aware of the literacy needs of their workers and, in particular, the needs and issues with respect to NESB women. In some occupations (and their unions), there is a very high proportion of NESB women (for example, Hospital Employees Federation No 1 Branch). Such women are amongst the most disadvantaged, due to low pay and lack of career paths. The problems are compounded often by family responsibilities, low self-esteem and communication problems. Unions see the need for literacy and English language training on-the-job but impediments to this come from employers who are reluctant to help finance such schemes and from women themselves who do not feel that they can avail themselves of education and training opportunities. Those working in the unions recognised that unions still do not do enough for NESB women workers, particularly 'pushing' such issues as child care, paid maternity leave, multilingual information, employment of ethnic liaison officers, teaching of languages and other related training.

Women's Electoral Lobby

As a lobby group, Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) attracts some NESB women, but they tend already to be literate bilinguals with good support networks. These women are themselves not in need of much assistance. WEL, however, continues to publicise the needs of ethno-specific groups and, as WEL Action Groups are established in response to concerns of members, would be willing to give help to NESB women if they asked for it.

Community Organizations

The Ethnic Communities' Councils recognize the following issues and problems for first and second generation NESB migrants. Particular groups, e.g., the elderly, Muslim women, outworkers, isolated housewives, have problems additional to those met by NESB migrants in general and they are less likely to have access to and participate in English language/literacy classes.

The social class differences among migrants, however, suggest that migrant women should not be seen as a homogeneous group. Some women are bound and limited by their perceptions of their role as homemakers.

There is some support for changes in regard to language and other training provisions. Changes include: testing of all newly arrived immigrants to establish level of English competency, if at all. This would enable provision to be made in streamed classes for intensive English, from which a credential could be granted. In the medium term, the Government must assume financial responsibility for English on the job and training associated with restructuring. There should be gender segregated programs not discrimination on a gender basis. Those out of the workforce need different language and training provisions in locations such as Neighbourhood Houses, ethnic clubs and welfare organizations. English language and other training should be provided for those with work-related injuries. Special attention should be given to the training of bilingual workers, for example, nursing aides, who can breach 'the ethnic' and English-speaking worlds and can work in their own communities and the English-speaking mainstream. More resources are needed to make clear assessments of competence levels in language so that particular needs, for example, technical language for professionals are not overlooked.

Other Ethnic community organisations supplied practical information based on first hand experiences with women in their organisations. The diverse needs of women because of age, location, competence in own language and in English were noted as the greatest problem. Transport difficulties for women to go to classes and to their Community Association were mentioned frequently. These organisations can only help in a limited way to deal directly with literacy and other language related needs.

The results obtained from these sources support the findings of other studies. They confirm that there is concern in the wider community about the issues of women, bilingualism, changes in work-related matters and literacy and other training. There is a pervasive worry that women not in the workforce should be valued too in Australian society. Perhaps the renewed focus of economic efficiency and productivity so much part of the Hawke Government's multiculturalism and immigration policies is thought to be over-emphasised.

Conclusion

The field of adult literacy, language, basic education and training is a growth area today. Government attention, in a new and focussed way, has turned to adult education. This has been stimulated by a range of factors including the consequences of immigration, Australia's parlous economic state, the philosophy of the Australian Labor Party which has unparalleled opportunities for expression given its federal and state electoral dominance (in the short-term any way), and the prominence accorded literacy by the 'celebration' of International Literacy Year. To gain some reasonable comprehension of the context and what is happening in this adult education sphere, we worked at both macro- and micro-levels. Our findings in this Chapter reflect those levels.

Information on policies, providers, provisions and potential changes were obtained from examination of documents, interviews with key informants and 'soundings' obtained from selective surveys. The data from interviews and surveys (both closed and open-ended questions) generally supported the findings of other research studies to be found in the literature. More of the information from interviews and also observations of classes have informed the findings, discussion and recommendations to be found in Chapters 4 and 5.

What these data-gathering procedures provided for us was (1) a **sense of reality** - the views from those people involved at all levels in the literacy, language and basic education fields, and (ii) a **sense of the dynamic state** of the field.

The findings so far have reinforced the particular literacy needs of NESB women to be found in other studies. They have revealed also that the issue of bilingual skills and bilingual literacy needs are much less likely to be examined in the current literature. In some sense, our findings are in accord with the conclusion expressed by Eliadis, Colanero and Roussos (1989:37):

> The most striking conclusion that can be made from the research on women from NESBs is that throughout their history in Australia they have been invisible. Their unique social experiences have been ignored and undervalued under the weight of general considerations about immigration, multiculturalism and gender. In recent years there has been a growing realisation that some of the issues and needs of women from NESBs need specific attention. Women from NESBs have for many years been stressing their particular interests and concerns, and while the various speakouts, conferences and papers have for the most part been voices in the wilderness, there is some evidence that some groups are beginning to listen. Community groups are beginning to cater for women from NESBs as a special group . . . . Once women from NESBs become visible then other barriers to their effective participation in Australian society will begin to break down.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENT PRACTICE AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Part 1
Surveying the Scene

1. Redefining Literacy

In Chapter 1 we have given the definition of literacy as adopted by the Darwin Seminar on Literacy (1989), in its report ***No limits to literacy***, which is inclusive of critical thinking. For the purposes of this report concerning the literacy needs of NESB women in Australia, we are extending the definition of literacy beyond the confines of a single language.

We consider three types of literacies. These are:

* monolingual literacy in English - the majority of the Australian population belongs to this category including some with an NES background;

* monolingual LOTE literacy - some NESB migrants fit into this category; and

* bilingual literacy in English and in a LOTE - this category includes both native and non-native speakers of a LOTE, the former being in the majority.

It is assumed that the redefined literacy is developed to a degree that satisfies the individual users' needs in their work and leisure activities.

The discussion that follows is based on the acceptance of our redefinition of literacy.

2. Who are the Learners?

Actual and prospective NESB women literacy students, as discussed in previous chapters, are a highly disparate group with respect to ethnolinguistic and educational background, age, length of residence, marital status, occupation and future aspirations. Because of this diversity, we propose to discuss the women's needs in terms of sub-categories formed on the basis of information gathered

through interviews, discussions, class observations and the perusal of reports. We will mainly, but not exclusively, focus on women with low English literacy skills and/or those who are likely to miss out on tuition.

2.1 Categories

The sources consulted reveal a consistent categorisation of NESB women whose needs are not sufficiently attended to. There are two main categories: those working or seeking/preparing for employment and those not concerned with paid work. Alongside these, there is a third group who are otherwise disadvantaged as well. These include women who are in prison, who are physically or intellectually handicapped or who are isolated for geographical and other reasons. As the ***Adult Basic Education Resource and Information (ARIS) Bulletin*** (1990) shows, there are various DFE supported projects under way in this area. Once these have been completed, it is expected that the information they yield, together with the results of previous projects, will be synthesised in a way useful to relevant organisations and individuals. The discussion here focuses on the two main categories. Undoubtedly some of the findings and suggestions are also applicable to the special groups, but such applications will not be discussed in detail.

Women not in the workforce who are likely to miss out are:

* new arrivals who are housebound because of young children;
* women with longer than three years residence;
* women whose husbands are unsympathetic to their educational and/or employment aspirations;
* new and older arrivals who are afraid to venture away from their immediate environment;
* older residents with high oracy and low literacy skills;
* women in the country; and
* refugee women.

The ***Women's Ethnic Network*** (1990) report lists the following attributes common to NESB women:

* married with children;
* substantial family commitments;

* low education levels;
* poor English;
* lack of transport;
* loss of identity;
* role confusion;
* isolation from family and community;
* cultural focus on others;
* low self esteem;
* alienation from Australian culture and bureaucracy;
* non participation;
* low motivation; and
* apolitical stance.

It must be remembered that this is a mainly negative group profile collected by observers in a certain locality so that it cannot be applied directly to a particular individual. Significantly, it presupposes that the women are poorly educated, married and have children. This is to ignore the single women and sole supporting parents. The list can, however, serve as a checklist and give some guidance in making provisions for these women. In doing so, a list of their positive attributes in terms of their competencies in managing a household, rearing children and other skills they may possess is needed. Unless this is available, the literacy pedagogy adopted may underestimated their abilities. The nurturing approach which, in general literacy tuition as well as in ESL literacy tuition, sometimes overrides the attention paid to the learning task is an issue which will be discussed in the methodology section. It was often raised by respondents, particularly in connection with women not in the workforce. Where provisions are not employment-oriented they often tend to consist of a single unit which does not lead to further study. Yet some of the women might be able and interested in continuing to upgrade their literacy skills independently of formal study or career aspirations. This should be considered their right. Teaching units or modules could be sequenced without destroying their character and their flexibility in order to suit women with different ambitions. Articulation of modules is on the whole mainstream provider policy and is

beginning to receive attention from community/ethnic organisations. The fact that this is sometimes the focus of a research project should be welcomed.

Currently accessibility of programs hinges on two interlocking factors; age and length of residence. If young, the women are likely to have pre-school-age children who, because of lack of child care, tie them to the home. Older women who have lived here longer than three years are also likely to miss out on literacy tuition.

In the past AMES catered for some of these women outside the workforce but provision for them is being phased out because of the new regulations hinging on years of residence. Understandably, TAFE with its vocational emphasis does not make an effort to recruit women who are not employment or study oriented, although a few classes do exist for them at present. The least well resourced sector, that of community and ethnic associations, feels responsible for organising classes for such women. This sector recognises their literacy rights and is able to employ various strategies for maximum dissemination of relevant information for ensuring the women's participation in decision making and continued access to literacy classes. Moreover, these providers are under lesser constraint to show immediate results and therefore are in a good position to experiment. The mainstream provider sector is already engaged in research as is the community/ethnic sector; the latter could be given increased support in terms of knowledge and funds in order to engage in research including experimental teaching, particularly in the area of bilingual literacy.

As community/ethno-specific organisations are often linked with local councils, they may be able to obtain help with transport, child care provision and health services. The latter does not feature in the list of attributes drawn up by the **Women's Ethnic Network** and was rarely mentioned by respondents. Yet some older retired women do have work-related health problems which might prevent them from carrying out the physical act of writing. Despite this, they should be given the opportunity to learn to read and perhaps use technical aids such as a touch screen when interacting with a computer.

The characteristics of these NESB women contribute to their isolation. This is an even greater problem for women living in the country. Even when transport is made available, it is difficult to form groups of learners because of lack of numbers. Other obstacles mentioned by project participants were the attitude to education by rural family members. (A more detailed account of the NESB country women's situation will be given later.)

Another group that is not frequently mentioned in the relevant literature is that of the refugee women. Undoubtedly, they are difficult to reach, yet they deserve special attention. Many are traumatised because of the torture they have suffered (Pittaway, 1990). These women need to sort out their personal problems before they can turn their minds to English literacy. It is essential to provide them with counselling services which are broader than the pedagogical counselling

provided by AMES. One urgent task therefore is to train bilingual workers who have the necessary preliminary qualifications or potential to undertake studies in psychological and pedagogical counselling. Such staff is practically non-existent and there are no designated positions for them. They should be attached to community/ethnic organisations which could share the counselling services on a regional basis, bearing in mind that non-refugee women may also need such help. Much of the writing by NESB women themselves published by provider organisations reveals that migration can be a long-lasting painful experience. Women attending courses offered by TAFE or tertiary institutions are in a better position because counselling services are usually available to them (for example, see Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE brochure on Certificate of Occupational Studies and Community Services for Women of Non-English Speaking Background).

Currently, a well organised program for giving isolated women a start in learning English is the AMES Home Tutor Scheme which uses volunteer tutors and operates on a face-to-face paired basis. Another scheme intended to serve individuals who for various reasons cannot attend classes is the AMES Distance Learning Unit. Both these provisions place learner and tutor into a one-to-one partnership so that English is used interactively. The success of these programs depends to a significant degree on this factor.

In contrast to individual tutoring, the attraction of group learning in classes is partly its social aspect. Our class observations support this view. The introduction of computer-assisted instruction to such classes might therefore be problematic if it is used exclusively in a self access mode which isolates the individual learner. Added to this is the cost of the equipment though this could be partly overcome by sharing facilities in regionally designated centres. Classes could organise themselves into practice groups and be provided with a timetable and transport for use of the facilities. Renting rather than purchasing equipment might help to alleviate the cost and rapid obsolescence of technological aids.

Self access learning can be individual or group based. The latter is greatly favoured because it gives rise to profitable discussion among learners. Sub-grouping is a widely used teaching strategy today particularly in multilevel classes which are typical for adult learner groups. It is therefore important to show adult learners how to operate in a group so that profitable peer teaching can occur. In our observations such teaching is spontaneously taking place in many instances. Learners clarify misunderstandings, explain concepts and correct each other's mistakes. Teachers group students according to level of language proficiency so that they can effectively help each other. But in some other respects many teachers do not have well developed sub-grouping skills. The various teacher education provisions need to take notice of this and provide the necessary training.

Categories of women in, or preparing for, the workforce likely to miss out are those who:

* seek promotion;
* work in enterprises which do not provide on-the-job literacy tuition;
* are not informed about literacy tuition opportunities;
* cannot be regularly released from work to attend classes;
* are afraid to admit that they are illiterate;
* are outworkers;
* are retrenched and want to retrain in their own industry;
* want to have their qualifications recognised;
* want to pursue part-time study; and
* have exceeded their pre-employment literacy tuition entitlement.

The situation of women in employment who are studying in the workplace is discussed in another section. Here we are concentrating on those who are not studying in the workplace. These comprise the unemployed, those who, whether employed or not, are pursuing or wish to pursue full-or part-time study and those who, employed or not, want their qualifications [vocational or professional] to be recognised.

The Ford/TAFE project (1990) has produced a model for the recognition of vocational skills and knowledge obtained through formal and informal study, work and life experiences. The model describes step by step the pathway an applicant would follow. Because the suggested procedure acknowledges skills gained informally, if adopted, it will give NESB women a better chance to have their job competency recognised. The procedure also offers opportunities for further training including ESL literacy tuition and hence opens up wider career options for migrant women.

It is hoped that the newly established Federal Office (NOOSR) will give the overseas qualified a similar flexible chance to obtain recognition of their professional qualifications. For example, doctors and dentists can now study, sit for an examination including English language proficiency, do a practicum and so obtain the right to practise their profession.

In sum, recent developments including the setting up of a Migrant Skills Qualifications Board in Victoria indicate the taking of a positive direction in qualifications, knowledge and skills recognition which, if followed, will augur well for NESB women.

It will, however, be wise for DFE to monitor the recognition procedures and to play an advocacy role on behalf of several categories of women. Firstly, women who are not getting the type of study/training of their choice need advocates. The regulation that bars unemployed women from retraining in their own industry seems illogical and unfair. This issue was raised by a number of the organisers and teachers we consulted. Both industry and government should be pleased that these women are trying to upgrade their skills and thereby make their industry more efficient. It may well be that a shrinking industry, for example, Textiles, Clothing and Footwear (TCF), needs a more highly skilled workforce than one that is not under threat of extinction. Secondly, women who would like to study part-time also need an advocate because their studies are usually not subsidised.

Women preparing to enter or re-enter the workforce are mainly found in TAFE and labour market courses such as SkillShare. A significant proportion of women attending labour market courses have been referred and consequently subsidised by various government agencies (for example the referral arrangements made between CES and Employment 2000). In this way, they have undergone a selection procedure which is not based on any clearly formulated and generally agreed on criteria. At present the number of classes/courses women can take is often limited by the referring agency which forces them to take a factory job as soon as they are functionally literate, thereby frustrating their higher career aspirations (Richmond Skillshare group interview). DFE could be instrumental in ensuring commonality in the way the women's needs are assessed, the type of study pathway that is plotted for them and the manner of support they are to receive.

Factors to be taken into account when drafting the selection criteria should include the women's educational history, whether their schooling was interrupted or not, and whether they have family responsibilities or not - young single women might be particularly well placed to pursue further study. Personnel involved in referring or selecting NESB women for courses need in-servicing to avoid the financial and human wastage of misjudged referrals.

Outworkers because of the manner of their employment cannot be provided with on-the-job instruction. Small business employees also pose a problem. Nevertheless, provision for their literacy instruction should be made; these are discussed in the English in the workplace section. Of course once a group is assembled and the necessary arrangements have been made, the women's learning needs are similar to those of permanent full- or part-time employees.

Briefly, it can be said, that in both the working and non-working women categories there are sub-groups who find it very difficult or even impossible to access classes/courses because of isolation, non-eligibility, lack of information or unsuitable programs. The latter two issues will be discussed in subsequent sections together with proposals on how to remedy the situation. The solutions to the former problems are economic and not conceptual. Inaccessible classes/courses can be made accessible by providing child care and/or transport and by changing eligibility regulations for the right to participate in the AMEP. The plea for these provisions in the relevant literature is supported by our findings.

The frustration felt by women who cannot access literacy tuition might be equally intense irrespective of their educational level and English proficiency. The groups that are least likely to help themselves, however, and those who need assistance most, are:

* the women who are housebound because they have small children and there is no available or affordable child care for them;

* older women who are not eligible to participate in the AMEP;

* younger women who need more intensive and a greater range of pre-employment, and further study bridging courses;

* small business employees and outworkers for whom it is difficult to make workplace literacy tuition arrangements; and

* rural women.

3. NESB Rural Women

NESB rural women are found in both categories, namely, those with an employment and a non-employment orientation. The data we have collected on the literacy needs of NESB rural women are relatively meagre. The country centres contacted in writing or over the telephone yielded scant results because NESB women did not participate in the literacy tuition the centres were offering. Yet there are NESB worker groups in rural areas such as Shepparton, Myrtleford and Mildura.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs is aware of the isolation of rural women and through its Office of Rural Affairs supports the Rural Women's Network Project which publishes the newsletter ***Network*** specifically directed at rural women. The newsletter disseminates useful information about various issues such as women and local government; and forthcoming events which might be of interest to women. Most importantly, however, it publishes the writings of the women themselves including letters to the editor. The 1990 Summer issue had a literacy focus. It

featured one contribution by an NESB woman and examples of women's writings in different languages by members of a class at Collingwood TAFE College. In view of the interest the editor displayed in NESB women by publishing their writing, we contacted her. Our conversation revealed some of the barriers that migrant women have to overcome in joining literacy classes.

In rural areas TAFE has the main responsibility for providing adult education. This militates against NESB rural women who are often of low educational background, poor and isolated. They are afraid of the formal learning situation provided by TAFE. For them a community based provider would be more appropriate.

This contention is supported by the Mildura example which shows that successful literacy classes can be established in rural areas for NESB women. For this to happen, however, there must be an enthusiastic, knowledgeable and energetic co-ordinator working under the auspices of a locally based organisation. This is the situation in Mildura where an experienced literacy co-ordinator has organised day and evening classes for NESB women. These have been in operation for some time. The characteristics of the programs are that they are associated with a community health centre which also offers health education and counselling. The latter is important because some of the women are threatened by family violence. Where necessary child care and transport are provided. Various models of literacy tuition are used including one-to-one and group teaching. The content of courses is survival skills oriented to dealing with everyday tasks such as obtaining a driving licence, banking and applying for a pension. The programs cater for women only. They compare favourably with a mixed gender group enrolled in a day time ESL course. Despite its success the program has difficulties in obtaining funds and securing a sufficient number of English speaking and bilingual volunteers. The greatest problem is lack of funds for additional professional staff. Lack of funding also affects the supply of resources such as teaching aids and reference materials for teachers. This is sad because the women are poor. Their isolation is aggravated by the high rate of unemployment in the area. The only work available is seasonal fruit picking, there is no manufacturing industry.

Our Mildura respondent believes that to make literacy tuition more accessible to NESB rural women the following conditions must be fulfilled.

1. Provision of a place where NESB rural women can drop in, are made welcome and can get information and counselling services;

2. Employment of an experienced co-ordinator, not an office worker, to organise education programs and other services;

3. Employment of community workers, preferably bilingual, to mix in the community for obtaining the co-operation of husbands, to make home visits and provide transport;

4. Provision of funds for teaching resources;

5. Provision of counselling services;

6. Creation of discussion groups to satisfy social needs;

7. Course content tailored to NESB rural women's needs;

8. Linking literacy courses with health services;

9. Linking literacy tuition with other courses;

10. Scheduling of courses taking the seasonal nature of rural work into account; and

11. Availability of interpreters.

In our experience the social aspect of attending literacy classes is a great attraction for NESB women generally many of whom feel and are isolated. The classes offer them an opportunity to exchange news, share concerns and form short or even long term friendships. Compared with NESB outworker women, the rural women are even more isolated. We therefore suggest that their social needs must be greater. This is recognised by the Geelong Ethnic Communities Council and Geelong Migrant Resource Centre which in its Annual Report 1989 strongly features its International Women's Club. Significantly, all the objectives of the Club relate to the social and educational needs of NESB women. Because of the limited information on NESB rural women, we quote the objectives in full as they admirably highlight the women's needs.

The Club aims:

a. to provide women from all ethnic backgrounds with opportunities to socialize;

b. to enable women from non-English speaking backgrounds to overcome their loneliness and develop new friendships;

c. to provide a support network for migrant women who may face isolation due to language and cultural barriers;

d. to facilitate the provision of information to women of all cultural backgrounds;

e. to provide migrant women with opportunities to develop new skills;

f. to provide migrant women with opportunities to develop their awareness of, and familiarity with their local environment; and

g. to enable women who are housebound by illness, disability or lack of transport, to participate in social and educational programs.

(1989: 19)

Class or face-to-face tutor based tuition are attractive because of their social aspect. But there are other delivery systems which, if used in combination, should also be considered. D'Cruz (1990:188-189) discusses some possible combinations for rural school age students. He points out that the individual strength of the systems can compensate for each other's weaknesses. In the case of adult women, there is the possibility of using a central delivery system such as radio or television, telematics for teleconferencing and the more conventional print based Distance Learning and Home Tutor facilities provided by AMES. The latter two are currently operative throughout Victoria. In combination, these delivery modes offer the important social contact (through Home Tutor scheme and teleconferencing) and the required professional expertise (through radio, television and Distance Learning provisions).

To make the combined systems operative the needs of the women in the different rural sectors would have to be ascertained, a viable combination of delivery systems established, suitable courses developed for these and an organiser appointed to co-ordinate their combined mode of delivery. The DFE regions in rural areas are in a good position to carry out these tasks. They are congruent with the 'Framework for Delivering a Regional Language Service' described in the DFE Occasional Paper 2 (1989:17-26). Pleasingly, the framework includes the teaching of LOTE within a regionally formulated language delivery strategy.

In addition to special arrangements, strategies should be developed to make mainstream rural activities inclusive of NESB women. The perusal of ***Network*** (Spring and Summer, 1990) reveals that there are many community activities, groups, services and courses which, if adjusted to their needs and made accessible to NESB rural women, would benefit them greatly in developing their literacy skills.

4. Providers

The providers of ESL adult literacy tuition can be grouped in three categories: **mainstream**, **community** and **business sectors**. The mainstream sector includes AMES, TAFE, CAE, labour market courses such as SkillShare (including Employment 2000) and the tertiary language centres at La Trobe University and RMIT. The community sector includes Neighbourhood Houses, Learning Centres (some specifically for women), Multicultural and Migrant Resource Centres, Community Health Services, Family Care Centres, Literacy Groups, City Councils and Municipal Libraries as well as ethnic associations, such as the Australian Greek Welfare Society and

CO-AS-IT. The latter is of particular interest to this study because it offers Italian literacy classes to Italian women not literate in their mother tongue. The business sector consists of private literacy agencies which teach for profit.

In broad terms, the various providers specialise in different types of courses, but as there are no set boundaries, there is some overlap between them which can lead to competition and mistrust instead of co-operation. This is being recognised and the major mainstream providers, namely AMES, TAFE and the Schools, have set up a liaising committee (TAS) to avoid duplication in the type of courses offered. For example with respect to English literacy in the workplace, AMES looks after beginners, that is those with ASLPR levels 0 to 2, while TAFE caters for more advanced learners. But with the increased demand for workskill-related literacy courses arising from award restructuring, this arrangement is becoming difficult to maintain. TAFE has the advantage that its non-TESL staff have more workskill expertise; on the other hand, AMES has been gaining expertise in researching industry-based workplace language skills.

There is also a potential for rivalry between the mainstream and the community sectors because both offer courses for new arrivals. Community sector providers argue that for NESB women of low level education their approach to teaching is the more appropriate. The sectors also overlap with respect to labour market courses.

What follows is a rough mapping of the providers' spheres of activity. AMES, because of Government directives, specialises in new arrival ESL literacy tuition and in English in the workplace. TAFE specialises in labour market and bridging courses some of which lead to accredited certification and so broaden career options. But it also offers general ESL literacy courses. The community sector believes that is has an important contribution to make in giving NESB women with low level education a start. The business sector has a contribution to make in specialised courses such as intercultural communication.

The introduction of the proposed Adult Basic Education Certificate (ABEC) might change the pattern of course deliveries. The move to allow private providers to tender for AMEP funding should also bring about change.

Generally experts in the field believe that variety in providers is desirable particularly if it is associated with sharing expertise in the various aspects of literacy tuition. Unfortunately present and foreshadowed funding arrangements militate against such co-operation.

A significant proportion of ESL courses, and in particular ESL literacy courses for NESB women, depend on short term funding available from a variety of government, charitable and other grant-giving bodies. This creates various difficulties. Much time and energy is spent on preparing applications for funding. Many successful and useful programs are funded only once and so have

to be discontinued; consequently the experience gained in delivering these courses is wasted. During interviews and consultations, staff of all types consistently expressed their frustration over their inability to plan ahead, to offer courses for which there is a demand and over the need to compete for funds because of the present resourcing policy. Clearly the considerable pedagogical expertise the staff possesses is not fully utilised for the delivery of courses, neither is the full range of needs covered.

5. *Types of Classes*

5.1 What is meant by literacy class?

As one of our respondents (Cabrera, telephone interview) pointed out, the term 'literacy class' is misleading, perhaps even damaging, as it prevents some prospective learners from enrolling. They find the term insulting because for them it has the implication of total illiteracy, whereas many NESB migrants are in fact literate in their L1. Their interest in literacy tuition stems from the need to become literate or upgrade their literacy skills in English. Many aspiring tertiary students and industry employees seeking promotion belong to the latter category. In order to avoid offence or confusion, we suggest that the titles of literacy classes are changed in a way that more clearly indicates their primary focus. We therefore suggest the following course titles: professional literacy, vocational literacy, business literacy, everyday literacy, social literacy, personal literacy and, most importantly, leisure literacy. If classes were to focus on specific sub-skills, these could be added to the title, for example 'leisure literacy: reading' or 'vocational literacy: writing'.

For the purposes of this discussion, we make a distinction between 'classes' and 'courses'. A 'class' refers to a study unit in a particular subject such as English for Migrant Women or Maths. A "course" refers to a group of subjects leading to an accredited certificate in a particular study area such as clerical work, child care, nursing or engineering. The term program is used when the distinction between class and course is not important.

Most ESL programs have a literacy skills component irrespective of whether or not the term 'literacy' appears in their title and/or description. Since literacy skills are used and developed in these programs, they are included in the literacy category.

5.2 Review of literacy classes

The class is part of a course linked with other subjects some of which might be practical, for example, typing. The course might lead to an accredited certificate. The aim is preparation for work or further study.

Examples are the clerical (re)-training courses offered by TAFE, SkillShare, and others. Typically the course components are ESL with emphasis on literacy together with maths, keyboard skills and computer studies. A variant developed by the Migrant Women's Learning Centre (Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE) offers as course content English language skills (listening

comprehension, oral communication, reading skills and writing skills, research skills, study techniques), Australian studies, vocational studies, Australian education and training systems and introduction to microcomputers. These courses have a preplanned syllabus but are flexible enough to accommodate learner needs. A significant number of NESB first job seekers or unemployed taking these courses are subsidised by CES. Another example is the overseas doctors' and dentists' qualifications course offered by Footscray TAFE. This course is strongly influenced by an external examination.

There are classes which are independent free-standing units formed in response to learner demand. These are usually provided by the community/ethnic organisations sector and serve residents who do not qualify for AMES classes although this is not always the case. Some women who do qualify still prefer to enrol in classes offered by local community providers. It seems that these women are too shy to avail themselves of mainstream services. As one community worker stated, "they must be kidded along" (Community Workers Workshop).

The aim of the classes is to get the women interested in learning, to boost their self concept and satisfy some of their social needs. There is no pre-established syllabus. Lessons are planned according to analysis of ongoing needs and constantly subject to negotiation. Certification is not considered.

There are other study units independent of each other which are nevertheless linked sequentially to learning pathways designed to satisfy one of four goals, namely proficiency in English for social purposes, further study, employment and promotion. An example of pathways developed by AMES is to be found in the information booklet for English classes at the Enterprise Adult Migrant Education Centre, Springvale.

English in the Workplace (EWP) classes represent a different type of provision. Currently they are free-standing units but in the process of award restructuring may become part of a multiskilling package and therefore closely linked to work-related skills. It is envisaged that the contents of such courses will be based on language and work skill audits, but will also include a general English literacy element. The Victorian Adult Basic Education Certificate being developed by the DFE will significantly influence these literacy classes. The increased participation of the private business providers will also make its mark. Currently all the mainstream providers are in some way involved with EWP. The role they will play in the future is hard to predict because of the move to make industry more responsible for its own on-the-job training. This has implications for a subject like English literacy the teaching of which demands specialist skills.

All these alternatives are available to NESB women. In some situations, they have the possibility of joining a class of women **only** which is often preferred for cultural, social and learning style reasons. Such an arrangement was favoured by a number of our respondents. Its usefulness is recognised by the Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE which has a Migrant Women's Learning Centre offering women various types of bridging courses for mainstream study or employment specially attuned to women's needs. Some courses focus on particular groups; one such is 'First Step' which targets sole supporting parents and the longer term unemployed. The courses offer a variety of options.

One course type, which has not been mentioned and which deserves further attention because of its implications for teaching methodology particularly in the workplace, is the course 'English through Skills Development'. Two courses are offered for women who wish to develop knowledge and skills while learning English: one English through sewing, the other English through horticulture.

Other modes of learning are studying with a home tutor on a one-to-one basis, pursuing an independent study program in a language centre (e.g., AMES, TAFE), joining an independent study group (e.g., Prahran College of TAFE Student Action Group) or enrolling in distance learning (e.g., with AMES or the Northern Metropolitan TAFE Migrant Women's Learning Centre bilingual project in Vietnamese).

There are also programs, mainly offered by TAFE but also by other providers, which prepare mature age students for the VCE which has a special ESL component. These ESL classes can be part of a complete VCE certificate though adult students do not have to take a complete VCE. They can select just one unit, in this case English, which will increase their chances of successful further study. It must be remembered that adults do not have to have a VCE in order to gain entry to a tertiary institution; special, mature age entry (for those twenty years and over), is available (***Further Ed***, August 1990:1-3).

6. Enrolment Procedures

There are no commonly agreed enrolment procedures in programs so that each provider has developed separate procedures. Generally, it can be said that prospective candidates at the ALBE level first make contact with the provider they have chosen with the help of an English-speaking family member or friend. They are then asked to present themselves for an interview and language test for which an interpreter may be available [if necessary]. If ASLPR or a similar placement instrument is used, it is handled as an integral part of the interview. Apart from ascertaining the level of language skills of the candidates, the interview takes into account other factors such as motivation, career aspirations and seriousness of purpose. The employment and further study oriented providers are particularly interested in these factors, whereas the community providers are often more concerned with the women's affective and social needs. Whichever is the case, there is

no doubt that admission interviews are conducted with great care and empathy and the utmost courtesy. Staff show great concern for candidates they cannot accommodate.

If the candidate satisfies the provider's specific entrance requirements, placement in a program depends on vacancies in a group of learners with similar language proficiency. If there is no vacancy or such a group does not exist, the candidate may be placed on a waiting list or referred elsewhere. Some providers follow up their referrals but in a situation where demand exceeds supply a number of women are bound to miss out on literacy instruction. Because there are no generally agreed enrolment criteria and because subjective judgment plays a role in the language testing instruments used, it is difficult to be sure that assessments of competency levels are comparable. Clearly variation in assessment can lead to the exclusions of women from some programs and/or the formation of groups encompassing a wide range of skill levels. Both consequences disadvantage NESB women.

The official information on literacy programs is mainly available in print and rarely indicates in detail the necessary prerequisites for enrolment. In any case, it is doubtful whether the targeted NESB women at ALBE level can read the publicity material or even if they did they would understand what is involved. As a consequence, NESB women may not apply for programs to which they could be admitted or are refused admission because they lack the necessary entrance requirements. Such a negative experience might discourage them from trying again. This is now widely recognised and providers in many instances take an advocacy role in helping women they cannot accommodate to find a suitable program.

A good example of what can be done to help women to identify classes/courses at various literacy and educational levels is the AMES pedagogical counselling service (Economou and Masters, 1989) and the various types of computerised database established by, for example, DFE, AMES and the TAFE Job and Course (JAC) Explorer which gives information on programs and enrolments. If the admission criteria could be agreed upon and the distribution of all types of programs across providers regionally organised, it might be easier for NESB women to find the literacy tuition that best suits their needs.

7. Types of Staff Required

The quality and range of personnel associated with the teaching of English literacy classes/courses for NESB women play a crucial role in the successful delivery of such programs. Ideally the following types of personnel are needed: ESL literacy teachers, academic and non-academic staff, technical staff with expertise in communication and the new technologies, and other professional staff.

7.1 ESL Literacy Teachers

Teaching staff needed include:

* monolingual English-speaking ESL literacy teachers particularly interested in teaching women;

* bilingual literacy teachers in ESL, a LOTE or both; and

* bilingual teacher aides literate in their mother tongue.

The staff, however, should not only be ESL literacy specialists but should also endeavour to broaden their expertise, so that they could offer the following additional specialist skills:

* ESL literacy curriculum development for NESB women;

* LOTE literacy curriculum development for NESB women;

* ESL and LOTE literacy methodology development for NESB women not literate in L1;

* work skills-based curriculum and methodology development;

* management of a language centre;

* planning and supervising individualised learning;

* familiarity with the new technologies;

* ability to act as a resource person for colleagues;

* ability to team teach; and

* ability to organise and supervise independent learning groups.

Such expertise would enhance the wider use of innovative learning/teaching arrangements and the informed exploitation of the new technologies which in turn should increase learner contact hours.

7.2 Academic communication and technical staff

At present the new technologies play a marginal role in adult literacy tuition. As a result of our investigation of what is needed and what is available, it is our conviction that the role of these technologies will expand when their cost effectiveness is recognised. It is therefore important that teaching staff familiarise themselves with the learning modes the new technologies offer and the type of curriculum materials the changing learning conditions require. In order to do this, they need the support of staff knowledgeable about hardware and software. Such staff consist of:

* communication professionals who can help teachers to use the new technologies in adult literacy programs for NESB women in both monolingual and bilingual modes; and

* technicians skilled in assembling and maintaining the high technology equipment at a low cost.

7.3 Other professional staff

In addition to the above, the availability of other professionals is also important. Such people should include:

* educational counsellors who are preferably bilingual;

* social and community workers who are experienced in giving gender-specific and cross-cultural support;

* health professionals who are experienced in gender-specific and cross-cultural counselling;

* librarians experienced in multicultural and group services;

* child care personnel familiar with cross cultural child rearing practices;

* public servants trained to service NESB women;

* bilingual workers trained to work alongside these professionals;

* bilingual workers trained in facilitating networking and the formation of groups among NESB women; and

* multicultural consultants to co-ordinate the activities of the non-pedagogical staff.

Most City Councils already employ the type of personnel described above. This is evident from the services they offer. (For example see ***Collingwood Community Resource Guide 1990-91***). It would be desirable if City Councils made the services of non-pedagogical professionals available to community and ethnic association providers of literacy programs for NESB women. The necessary funds for such an arrangement could perhaps be obtained from the Ethnic Affairs Commission or other grant giving sources interested in the welfare of NESB women.

Priscilla Clark, Director of the Free Kindergarten Association (FKA) (personal communication) has pointed out it is not enough to provide child care for NESB women, this provision must be culturally appropriate. It is important to draw attention to this point because it tends to be overlooked even by the most enthusiastic supporters of the NESB women's cause.

The range of staff required reflects the complex conditions that have to be fulfilled if NESB women are to achieve their individual literacy goals.

8. Dissemination and Participation

8.1 What neend to be disseminated and to whom?

Dissemination of information is an important factor in the equitable and successful delivery of programs. It is a complex task because of multi-layered groups of participants and the multi-faceted relationships between givers and receivers of information. In fact at times information givers may become information receivers and vice versa.

In broad terms, the givers of information are various Federal and State bodies including the Ministry of Education, the Ethnic Affairs Commission, CES and the providers. The receivers are the literacy professionals, other personnel, industry, unions and the NESB women. The information disseminated is of a disparate nature as different recipients need to know different things. Information required by providers, teaching staff and researchers includes:

* policy options/papers;
* funding arrangements/application opportunities;
* ongoing projects/research;
* conferences, seminar/workshops, degree courses and short courses, e.g., summer schools;
* newly published books and articles in literacy theory and practice;
* newly published literacy course materials for NESB women;

* newly published leisure reading for NESB women literacy students;

* common professional interest groups;

* subjects/courses in literacy offered by other providers; and

* new developments.

In fact these items of information are currently being distributed mainly through the print media and conferences/seminars, but also through using the new technologies in establishing various databases. Examples of the print media are the DFE publications ***Adult Basic Education Resource and Information Service (ARIS) Bulletin***, ***Monthly Memo*** and ***Further Ed***, the new journal ***Open Letter***, other newsletters, bulletins and journals such as ***EMC News***, ***Migration Monitor***, ***Focus***, ***OSWOMEN Newsletter***, ***Good Practice***, ***Literacy Link***, ***Link-up***, ***ILY Update***, ***United Nations Review*** and database compilations such as the ***Australian Adult Basic Education Research Database***.

Government and non-government bodies, providers and industry also offer interested professionals various conferences, seminars and in-service workshops and meetings to keep them up to date on all types of development. Examples are the DFE Adult Basic Education Research and Curriculum Forums: Literacy in Industry, Partners in Productivity and A Focus on Research; ILY National Conference; ALAA Conference; Valbec ESL/Literacy Interest Group Workshop: Strategies for Literacy for Bilingual Students; Literacy into the 1990s: International Literacy Year and beyond Conference; The Inaugural Australian Systemic Network Conference: Literacy in Social Processes; Bureau of Immigration Research Seminar: Assessing the Needs of Refugee Women in the First Two Years of Settlement; and The Right to Read: Publishing for People with Reading Disabilities, a National Library of Australia Seminar. In addition, there are in-service seminar workshops offered by AMES (for example the Inservice Series: Action Research on Literacy, 1990) and the TAFE sector (for example, the Footscray College of TAFE Compensatory Education Department Conference 'Towards the Future', 1990). A number of these came to our attention all of which were without exception of a high standard.

Clearly, much information is being made available to professionals, but the question is whether they can avail themselves of what is being offered. They must make the necessary arrangements for attending meetings and find the time to keep abreast of reading in their area of expertise. This is not easy because of the time-consuming nature of course planning and lesson preparation which significantly increases their workload. We therefore advocate a reduction of teacher workload and in a later section of this report make some suggestions as to how to achieve this. Of course full-time staff usually have the advantage of being granted leave for conference/seminar attendance.

Part-time and casual staff are in a less favoured position although AMES includes them in their in-service programs. The information is accessible to them but generally they have to use their own time for collecting and processing what is available.

Volunteer home tutors, who are not trained teachers, are in a different situation. They need information specific to their one-to-one tutoring role, including strategies on how to keep their students interested, ideas concerning activities, cross-cultural information about various ethnic groups, information about suitable reading material, and examples of students' writing which demonstrate possible learning outcomes. They also need information about relevant conferences and interest groups. The editors of ***In Touch*** are attuned to these needs and are conscientious in satisfying the tutors' requirements in an uncomplicated practical way. This is policy. The needs of highly educated tutors who may be interested in more sophisticated explanations and teaching strategies are not addressed. It is not known whether if such information were provided it would be used. Clearly, what cannot be controlled is the use home tutors make of the information and other in-service provisions made for them. Some may not wish to give more of their time than the agreed number of contact hours and so may not avail themselves of information given. The Home Tutor Scheme cannot insist that they do so.

Undoubtedly home tutors fill an important gap in ESL literacy tuition. Without them isolated women, namely women in the country, young women with small children and older women who are too shy or who find it difficult to move about and so cannot attend classes, would miss out completely on literacy tuition. Home tutors can play a useful role in introducing them to literacy and helping them along until they are in a position to join a literacy program as members of a class or in some form of independent study. Because the Scheme works on a one-to-one tuition basis it would be too costly to operate it with non-voluntary staff. But the problem of ensuring that tutors use the information available to them remains. Offering tutors semi-social occasions where they might exchange experiences and learn from each other might be a strategy worth exploring.

The Home Tutor Scheme is well established. It is funded by DILGEA under AMEP and so has the means of disseminating information to its volunteer staff. There are various newsletters, bulletins and journals providing information for literacy teaching professionals, of which **ARIS** is perhaps the most comprehensive. Professionals and volunteer tutors are therefore adequately catered for. In contrast there is no single body or section within a government organisation which is responsible for disseminating the full range of necessary information to non-teaching personnel including bilingual workers. Yet unless such personnel are fully informed they cannot provide the necessary guidance some of the women need if their literacy ambitions are to be fulfilled. The brief leaflets and brochures distributed during the 1990 Literacy Year aimed at arousing interest do not provide the detailed in-depth information needed by personnel in touch with NESB women. Clearly here is a gap in dissemination of information which DFE could fill by publishing regularly a news sheet on the model of the ***ARIS Monthly Memo***, targeting this group of readers.

Because of award restructuring, industry and the unions are now also interested in literacy tuition and therefore need information. At several conferences/workshops we attended industry representatives raised the issue of insufficient communication between themselves and potential literacy tuition providers. To put it bluntly, they did not know what they should look for with regard to aims and content of classes/courses. For example, industry representatives at the Literacy in Industry conference (1990) and the National Languages Institute of Australia Language Testing Users' Workshop (1990) found it difficult to choose wisely as criteria are not available to industry and unions to enable them to differentiate between the competing providers in the mainstream, community and business sectors. In this 'user pays' situation, it is hoped that industry will look not only at the cost quoted, but also at the quality of literacy programs offered when making a choice of provider.

Action has already been taken in this regard by the Textiles, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) Industry Training Board which organised a TCF Basic Education/Language Network Meeting in December 1990. The aim of the network is to maintain a high profile for basic education/ESL within the TCF industries, to encourage a co-operative effort between all parties, to prepare directories of ESL/basic education training and to promote these through the ITB newsletter. This networking activity could solve the problem and serve as a model for other industries.

Prospective women literacy learners have difficulties both in finding out about the existence of classes/courses and in understanding what is available. If they do not get to hear about classes/courses, they are of course automatically excluded from attending them. But even if they hear about them, there are problems with the ways by which the women are contacted and the type of language used to inform them of what is available. It is generally assumed that the users of information can handle spoken or written Australian English in whatever form it is transmitted; the same cannot be said about the prospective women.

Because demand/need outstrips supply, providers of literacy tuition are generally not publicity conscious. Without a publicity policy, providers rely heavily on word of mouth dissemination of information about their programs, a method which assumes the existence of networking. Providers also produce various types of print material apparently unaware that there are various problems with print media publicity. The most obvious one is the contradiction of giving information about learning a skill using as a medium of communication the very skill the learners are supposed to acquire. Clearly beginners cannot access the print publicity directly themselves; often they cannot understand it even when it is read to them aloud. This is partly because of the stylistic differences between oral and written language, and partly because of the concepts associated with learning generally and literacy learning in particular.

If publicity were stepped up, however, the need for tuition would surface more strongly and provision would have to increase accordingly on the basis of the access and equity principle. Because of the heterogeneous nature of the prospective women learners, an array of dissemination strategies by the various providers would have to be developed and employed.

Undoubtedly some of the providers are aware of the problem and seek various solutions such as big print, graphic illustrations and multilingual texts. However, others use small print and their class/course descriptions are stylistically and conceptually difficult and are not fully informative. Often it is not clear how classes/courses link with each other in the sequenced development of literacy and how they relate to other classes/courses leading to some form of accredited certification or internal assessment. This criticism applies equally to handbooks, publicity brochures and leaflets.

Much could be gained by rationalising the presentation in print of information about classes/courses. This could be done by producing a set of information brochures targeting different literacy levels, designed to explain the advantages of literacy and describing some of the planned learning activities. Provider workshops could also be organised to address the problem of the kind of plain English accessible to ESL learners. The next step is to have these materials translated into the dominant community languages. The Ethnic Affairs Commission could help in accomplishing this task. Some countries of origin might also be prepared to sponsor such translations through their cultural services.

The question of plain English is not simply confined to NESB women or to the whole of the NESB population but to the Australian public generally. Significantly the Green Paper ***The Language of Australia***, (1990a) has taken up the plain English issue. It aptly states that:

> There is little point in encouraging people to develop their reading skills if they are then confronted with public documents which are basically unreadable. Plain English is good, clear writing, presented in such a way that people reading it can understand it.

The paper urges that:

> It is time for governments and private corporations to take up the issue of 'reader friendly' documents, not only for their own greater efficiency and productivity, but also for greater equity in access to public information. Again, this is an issue of social justice as well as economic sense.
>
> (1990:20-21)

This has already been recognised and taken up by some professional bodies such as the Law Reform Commission of Victoria (1990). The editing processes they are developing should help

other bodies including the various official agencies which have a substantial NESB clientele. Following this lead ESL literacy teachers through their subject association (VATESOL) could start a movement of plain English in education and the workplace. DFE could lend support to this movement by establishing a plain English sub-unit. The conceptual, cultural and linguistic assumptions underlying the completion of official forms such as those distributed by CES have been analysed by Green to show their considerable complexity (AMES Action Research on Literacy Workshop, 1990). It is our contention that if ESL learners are relieved of such learning tasks they could engage in more useful activities than the completion of unnecessarily complex official forms. In sum, learning can be facilitated by reducing the difficulty of what is being learnt.

Information about literacy classes/courses is also disseminated through radio. Here the ethnic electronic media could play a greater role. A more effective way than the print and electronic media of contacting NESB women of low level education is by systematic door knocking. This was done by staff of the Migrant Women's Learning Centre in Collingwood and by tutors who took lap-top computers into high-rise flats for NESB women's use in literacy learning. This proved a success with NESB women in Fitzroy showing that it is a fallacy to think that women cannot handle technology: after all a sewing machine is just that.

8.2 Modes of dissemination

Dissemination of information, **participation in decision-making** and access to tuition are clearly linked. It is important therefore to have a viable model for the dissemination of information. An 'access and equity' model recently developed and tested by the Women's Ethnic Network of Victoria (1990) could be used by mainstream as well as community/ethnic organisations for a more penetrating dissemination of information than those reviewed above and for giving NESB women the opportunity to participate in decision making about classes/courses to be offered.

8.2.1 *Access and Equity Model*

Outline:

* Set up a Steering Committee;
* Identify the theoretical and practical aspects of the task;
* Choose the location;
* Locate the ethno-specific groups to be involved;
* Make preliminary contact with NESB women workers and group members;
* Solve problems encountered;

* Establish contact with target groups;

* Consult target groups for choice of options for action;

* Arrange information days;

* Form a cross-cultural group with a representative from each women's group to accomplish one of the chosen options; and

* Arrange meetings and seminars for bilingual workers.
(Based on Women's Ethnic Network 1990:2-6).

The project summarises the consultation tasks as follows:

1. Locate and consult with key workers.

2. Locate and consult with bilingual workers.

3. Locate and consult with ethno-specific women's groups.

4. Collate findings.

5. Establish a list of options; ascertain their feasibility.

6. Present options to groups and reconsult.

7. Plan strategies according to feedback.
(Women's Ethnic Network 1990:7).

The model and the accompanying task specifications are of interest because they extend the efforts of canvassing individuals to canvassing groups, thereby reaching a greater number of women. It also draws attention to the role bilingual workers can play and to the need for training these workers and providing them with continuous support. The importance of groups focussing on tasks of their own choice is also highlighted. In this model the women's cultural group was preparing a photographic exhibition.

The model can be used by service providers to identify the women needing literacy tuition and to ascertain the form this should take. Examples of the range of options from which the women could choose are:

* exclusive focus on literacy;
* exclusive focus on one of the sub-skills of reading and writing;
* integrated literacy and oracy development;
* literacy tuition focussing on intercultural communication;
* literacy tuition incidental to the acquisition of skills of personal interest; and
* literacy tuition incidental to the acquisition of vocational skills.

Whether these options are desirable and feasible in both English and the ethnic language or in only one of them would be subject to negotiation. Clearly the full range could not be provided but it would be useful to know what NESB women want if they are given time to reflect on the matter and practice in voicing their opinion in public. It must be remembered that many of the women come from cultures where information sharing and action strategies rely on extended family networks; this is unlike the Australian culture which relies in the main on committees and associations formed because of shared interests (Smolicz, 1979). Consequently migrant women need to be prepared for the interactive skills this requires. Bilingual workers could play a useful role here.

8.2.2 *Interest Group Model*

An example of a spontaneously formed bilingual English-Spanish ESL class with a literacy component is that provided by the Eccumenical Migration Centre (EMC) at Footscray. Initially a group of Spanish-speaking women from South America got together because they were interested in acquiring skills in folk art. After a while, when they had developed a group identity, they expressed an interest in learning English. With the help of the teacher they obtained funding including money for materials, such as paper and dictionaries. One important element in forming this group was the understanding that it would be conducted bilingually.

This model is relevant where city councils and community/ethnic organisations play host and support NESB women's interest/social groups (for example, see the annual reports of councils with a high NESB migrant density). In order to contact these groups, bilingual workers, trained in making contact with individuals and groups are needed. Such people could be either paid workers or volunteers. The actual teaching would be the task of professionals, preferably with bilingual

skills, particularly at the basic adult education level. Another technique for contacting NESB women has been developed by AMES staff who service pregnant women in hospital waiting rooms; these members of staff also have a teaching role.

A variant of this technique is to contact a highly respected woman in an ethnic group, arrange a social gathering in her home and with her help pass on the necessary information. This technique has been used successfully by the Women's Learning Centre in Collingwood without the help of a bilingual worker, although the services of the latter would be an advantage.

The access and equity and the doorknock models of disseminating information are not as yet widely used. They are costly in terms of staffing, time and effort compared with the distribution of print publicity and spontaneous local networking. These methods by themselves are sufficient to create a demand that considerably exceeds what can be provided given the available financial resources. Nevertheless, the effort to make the relevant information more widely accessible is not wasted because strategies to satisfy real need, as opposed to explicit demand, should be planned.

If DFE han an NESB women's unit it could, through its regional representatives, supply the support structure for the types of recruitment described. It could help with applications/arrangements for funds, with training the recruiting staff, with counselling, venue, follow-up learning and any other matters that may arise.

DFE could also consistently advertise existing dissemination channels such as the Women's Information and Referral Exchange (WIRE) funded by the Department of Community Services, Victoria. This telephone information service is available to any woman anywhere in Victoria for the price of a local call. It advertises its way of operating in eight languages: English, Greek, Italian, Polish, Rumanian, Serbo-Croat, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese. The information it can give is wide ranging, from pensions to publishing, from clinics to self-help groups. DFE could suggest that WIRE place information on literacy classes/courses high on its list of services.

Part II
Meeting the Needs Now and in the Future

9. Bilingual Approach

Scattered throughout a number of recent reports on the language and skill requirements of migrants are references to bilingual learning/teaching often specifically referring to women. For example, Crusca (1987:19) who is concerned with 'increasing migrant women's access to the full range of educational, vocational and personal opportunities' suggests that the need for bilingual learning/teaching should be recognised. She calls on tertiary teacher training institutions to train teachers for this purpose. Curiously, the report defines a number of terms currently used in discussing the educational needs of migrants but bilingual learning/teaching is not among them. Similarly O'Grady and Kang (1985) who advocate the use of L1 in L2 learning do not make a clear distinction between using L1 in the course of teaching L2 and the teaching of subject matter in both languages. Yet the concept of bilingual learning/teaching in the adult learning context needs clarification.

9.1 Bilingual education for school age students

Bilingual education has proved a useful approach to developing school age students' competence in their mother tongue and in a second language through using these as the medium of instruction throughout the curriculum. In other words, it entails the use of two or more languages for learning new concepts in various subject areas. In this situation, language is a tool rather than an object of study in itself.

The effectiveness of bilingual education for the young is rooted in the close connection, although not identity, between cognitive and language development. As concepts are formed, the young learner spontaneously looks for the linguistic forms to express them (Slobin 1975). In this case, cognitive development acts as an efficient selection device in what is learnt and when (Rado 1975). This is why first language acquisition is generally so successful. Bilingual education for school-age students tries to imitate natural language acquisition by teaching subject matter both in the first and second language and thus stimulating concept development by means of both.

There are various models of bilingual education, not all of which introduce children to literacy in the same way. One widely used model in the United States as well as in Victoria teaches literacy skills first in the mother tongue before introducing primary-age children to reading and writing in the second language, in this case English (for examples of models, see Curriculum Frameworks Project, 1988). The model which introduces mother tongue literacy first and delays second language literacy is based on the principle that children cannot learn literacy skills in a language they do not understand (Rado, 1989). This principle is too simplistic. In the education of minority

children, as in education generally, social factors must also be taken into consideration. In this instance, the fact that the minority language speaker is faced by the literacy task in the dominant language inhibits learning. If the situation is reversed, as happens in 'immersion' programs where the dominant language speaker learns to become literate in a minority language, the second language does not seem to inhibit learning.

Research has shown that bilingual education is a powerful teaching methodology in the instructional context of schools where the long term investment of time is taken for granted. This is important because it seems that it takes approximately eight years for children to become fluent bilinguals (Cummins and Swain, 1986; Rado, 1989).

The relationship between child and adult language learning is a controversial topic. Undoubtedly there are both similarities and differences, some of which are more easily observed and better documented than others. For example, we know that children under the age of four have an extraordinary capacity to learn new words. According to Carey (1978), they learn on the average eight words a day. Young children are also particularly apt in the acquisition of a native-like pronunciation in a second language. In contrast, for adults, these learning tasks are much more difficult. Adults find it almost impossible not to transfer some of the sounds and intonation patterns of their first language to the second. Characteristically, they often complain that they do not remember new words. Children, however, are not better language learners in every respect; adults have the advantage of being able to use their experiences and the learning strategies they have developed to help them to cope with a new language.

9.2 The bilingual approach for adult learners

Given the approaches to bilingual education adopted by schools, one wonders what adult literacy experts and researchers mean when they advocate such a methodology without examining it in detail. In other words, the question is what is meant by bilingual education in the adult second language learning context.

Bilingual education encompasses the whole curriculum and is therefore often not directly applicable to adult language learning/teaching which tends to focus on language as a single subject. It is therefore more appropriate to talk about a bilingual approach and within that to identify three types, namely:

1. bilingual education;

2. bilingual teaching; and

3. bilingual support.

O'Grady and Kang (1985:76-78) suggest the following models of the bilingual approach observed in adult ESL classes:

* L1 reduction - the use of L1 is gradually phased out;

* L1 as a back-up - L1 is used for explanations;

* L1 as a frame for the lesson - L1 is used to introduce and round off classroom activities;

* L1 used to contextualise the lesson - the prerequisite knowledge is provided in L1;

* Linked skills presented bilingually - skills are taught in L1 and L2 by a skills teacher and a bilingual teacher.

O'Grady and Kang do not indicate whether the L1 input in each instance is purely oral or also written.

First, it is important to point out that all the models presuppose a teacher-centred approach to tuition. Secondly, in the first four models, the mother tongue is limited to explaining and contextualising the texts being studied. In this way, its use is subordinate to the dominant language. Undoubtedly the claim that the use of the first language speeds up comprehension and so saves learning time is valid, particularly in a situation where the short duration of teaching modules is a serious concern, as is currently the case in ESL literacy teaching in Australia. It is also true that first language support can sustain the learner who may be threatened by the difficulties encountered in using a second language.

These advantages, however, may be counterbalanced by the disadvantages arising from an alternation of two languages, if this is done indiscriminately. Frequent switching between two languages is counterproductive because it tends to lead to interference in the form of transference of linguistic features from one language to the other. Transference can negatively affect both the mother tongue and the second language.

The alternate use of two languages not only creates a situation where two language systems interfere with each other, but it can also reduce the need for concentrating on the target language as the clarification of meaning is easily at hand. There is less need then to listen or read with the greater attention a second language demands from the learner.

These considerations can help to rank the usefulness of the models. The first two are reminiscent of the 'grammar-translation' method which focussed on checking comprehension in the mother tongue with little concern for the productive use of language. Although this is probably not the

case in ESL classes in Australia today, transitory and unplanned L1 support probably amounts to the misuse of the teachers' bilingual skills which could be put to better use. This is regrettable as bilingual teachers or teacher aides are relatively scarce. It is important to note that the first two bilingual support models are characterised by the unplanned use of L1 in the course of teaching L2.

Models three and four have some linguistic merit. The latter recognises the important role contextualisation plays in comprehension. In assigning a definite role to L1 and planning the manner of its use, the negative effects of L1 interference can be minimised. The same can be said about the model which uses L1 to introduce and round off a lesson. In fact both models use L1 for well defined and planned instructional purposes. In this way, they have some commonality with bilingual education for school-age children and adolescents.

For bilingual teachers to provide bilingual support is relatively simple. Apart from team teaching there are some strategies that monolingual teachers can use too, such as allowing students time to discuss in their mother tongue what has been presented as well as giving them material to read in their L1 (O'Grady and Kang 1985:91). In contrast, bilingual teaching in the adult context is much more complex and is awaiting the development of a range of strategies including the co-operative teaching of the subject/skills teacher and the language/literacy teacher where literacy acquisition is associated with the learning of new skills and concepts.

Although not generally favoured in language teaching, using the ethnic language as a support has a role to play in migrant women's English literacy classes. It is a well known fact that members of adult literacy classes often have a low self-concept, are anxious and feel insecure. Using their mother tongue to share their concerns and ask questions in a supportive and familiar language environment gives them relief and enables them to concentrate on the learning task. Such learners are often found in low oracy and low literacy classes. For them, learning with bilingual support might be essential.

Although the bilingual support approach is simpler to implement than a full scale bilingual program, it nevertheless requires experienced bilingual teachers and suitable bilingual materials. But a beginning has been made by NSW AMES in the form of a report and some handbooks for teachers (O'Grady and Kang 1985; Wise and Nguyen 1987; O'Grady and Wajs 1989).

In the more complex area of bilingual teaching there is also some work under way. For example, in the UK, Monica Lucero (Literacy Co-ordinator, Pimlico Westminster Adult Education) is working on an ALBSU Local Development Project (professional correspondence) concerned with English Literacy through Bilingual Approaches. Distinctive features of this project are the planned use of the two languages throughout and the use made of this approach to heighten the linguistic awareness of learners. The latter is of considerable value in editing one's own writing, in other

words, in becoming an independent writer. The Pimlico project, when completed, should serve as a useful source of information for developing a bilingual teaching methodology. Undoubtedly, a start has been made in exploring the type of teaching materials required but much more work has to be done in this area as well as in the preparation of teachers and the theoretical justification of the method. What must be stressed is that giving bilingual support and teaching in the bilingual mode are not the same.

9.3 Bilingual literacy

Bilingual teaching and bilingual education develop and maintain literacy in more than one language simultaneously. The question is whether this is profitable in Australia today. Since the publication of the ***National Policy on Languages***, bilingual literacy has become an issue of national significance because of internal and external socio-economic pressures (Lo Bianco, 1987; Boreland, George and Rado, 1989). More recently the AACLAME (1990) organised 'Language is Good Business' conference has highlighted the advantages for business enterprises in being able to operate in various LOTE. In order for this to happen a proportion of the vocationally and professionally trained workforce must be bilingual. As one of the conference speakers remarked (Barratt 1990:5) 'the best agent to represent a firm's project is not necessarily the person who speaks the most fluent English'. This implies that in some situations knowledge of the trading partner's language might matter more than fluency in English. This is recognised by the Commonwealth Government so that its proposed national objectives for languages other than English include (Green Paper, 1990(a):40):

* increasing public awareness of the benefits of language learning, particularly in combination with other vocational skills;

* increasing access to language programs through mainstream education provision and distance education mechanisms;

* supporting measures which motivate students at all levels in all education sectors to study languages;

* increasing the number of students who study languages at secondary level.

The Commonwealth proposes to realise these objectives through a new body of Community Literacy and Language Services (CLLS). In fact the Green Paper goes as far as suggesting that one of the possible options to encourage more widespread participation in the learning of LOTE is 'making a language compulsory to Year 12, in addition to the already compulsory English subject'.

Currently there are reasonable opportunities for school-age and tertiary students to study LOTE during and after conventional school hours. For adults who want to become literate or maintain their native LOTE, there is hardly any provision. There are tertiary advanced and beginner's language courses which are not language maintenance oriented and are in any case out of reach for most NESB women. The few TAFE LOTE classes (for a discussion of tertiary LOTE courses see Rado and Foster, 1989) focus mostly on the VCE and not on language maintenance. Yet vocationally and personally, it would benefit the women greatly to acquire, upgrade or maintain literacy skills in their mother tongue.

Regretfully, the Green Paper, although promoting the learning of LOTE, focuses mainly on strategy options at school (including ethnic schools) and tertiary levels. Adult learners not involved in formal courses are only mentioned in connection with the workplace (1990(a):40).

> Provision for learning languages other than English can be made in the workplace or through community provision, supported, for example, through the CLLS, as well as through schools and higher education institutions. To maximise the effectiveness of courses provided in the workplace and at community level, it will be important for providers to link with language courses available in schools and higher education institutions.

One of the proposals under consideration by the Commonwealth is to 'stimulate the provision of intensive vocationally oriented second language programs for adults relevant to the needs of industry and government'.

This proposal does not specifically target NESB adults. Apparently, the advantage the knowledge of a LOTE bestows on them in developing literacy skills in the LOTE is not recognised. Consequently, the existing language resources of part of the Australian workforce will not be utilised. According to the arguments reviewed in the Green Paper, this constitutes an economic loss.

L1 literacy has aroused interest because some believe that being or becoming literate in L1 is a prerequisite of becoming literate in L2. Although as Kalantzis (1986) points out, there is no convincing evidence that this is generally the case. For example, if the writing system does not use the Roman alphabet this might delay the acquisition of literacy to an extent that would make such an approach impracticable. One can also argue that confining NESB women's mother tongue to a transitional role in the acquisition of literacy is doing it an injustice. As we have argued the usefulness of L1 literacy is much broader. This has been recognised, for example, by the RMIT Centre of English Language Learning which has proposed a multipurpose LOTE and ESL course for persons from both native English speaking and native LOTE speaking backgrounds who cannot optimise their language skills because these need further development. Spanish, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian, Italian and Greek were identified as Community LOTE for the multipurpose course.

However, the course was unsuccessful in obtaining funding. It is our contention that such courses would greatly benefit NESB women and therefore should be given priority in funding.

A number of labour market oriented courses offered to NESB women cannot be accessed by them unless they undertake preparatory study. This is not necessarily so because they are not ready to deal with the subject matter cognitively, but because of the English language barrier. Prahran TAFE has taken the initiative, for example, for removing the language barrier by offering a bilingual stream of the Child Care Assistant course. The subjects are the same as for the general stream but taught in the students' LOTE. There used to be extra hours for English as a second language but this had to be discontinued because of lack of funding. The course leads onto an Assistant Diploma in Child Care and careers such as nursing. This is a good example of how to utilise NESB women's existing knowledge in preparing them for employment. It also shows how lack of funding can weaken a course by reducing the teaching from being bilingual to a monolingual mode.

Some TAFE colleges offer short courses in LOTE for adults who wish to upgrade their labour market skills or learn new ones. The available courses at Prahran TAFE are Introduction to Computers, Word/Data Processing Packages and Industrial Sewing taught, for example, in Vietnamese. Such courses would be ideally suited for bilingual education given that the emphasis is on work skill acquisition and not on language. Adopting a bilingual approach is not a round about way of learning/teaching. It is a methodology the power of which is recognised by supporters of bilingual education. Bilingual courses could not only play an important role in upskilling bilingual women faster than is the case now, but could also entice older women to join classes. Such women need bilingual support because they are threatened by the formal learning context, the possibility of failure and the personally demanding nature of language learning.

9.4 Ways of implementing the bilingual approach

In the AMES and the community sector we have observed two bilingual classes relying on bilingual support in Spanish. These classes follow the O'Grady and Kang (1985) model which uses L1 as a back-up. The AMES class is situated in Clayton and the EMC class in Footscray. To a minor degree, the latter is also concerned with conceptual development. The former is taught by a non-native speaker of Spanish which to some extent puts teacher and students on an equal footing. Despite the unplanned nature of the method adopted, both groups seem highly satisfied. Clearly, in education, success depends on a number of factors, teaching methodology being only one of these. This is not to deny that bilingual teaching might generally be preferable to giving bilingual support. As yet, however, we have insufficient research data on this issue.

9.5 Teacher centred bilingual approach

As a methodology the teacher-centred bilingual approach cannot be chosen freely because it presupposes an ethno-specific bilingual group whose English oracy and literacy ability is similar. It also presupposes the availability of a teacher, or a teacher and teacher aide team, and appropriate teaching materials. These are practically non-existent. Publications like Wise and Nguyen's ***Australian Conversation for Vietnamese*** (1987) have made a beginning in providing the text in both languages, in highlighting the importance of the cultural context and in providing both a teacher and student book and a cassette in Vietnamese. The actual teaching strategies adopted are not necessarily the most effective and would have to be modified considerably for teaching literacy skills.

The lack of materials is certainly a burning issue. Without them bilingual learning cannot proceed. Strategies we are proposing might solve this problem. (See curriculum development model in this chapter).

Whether the simultaneous acquisition of literacy in two languages is a viable proposition for NESB women not literate in their L1 is an undecided question. In the case of children we know of one research project (Edelsky, 1986) which shows that the literacy gains in one language are transferred to the other. In other words, bilingual literacy acquisition facilitates literacy development in both languages. If this is true for children, it does not follow that it is true for adults as well. Researching this question is one of the important tasks that should be undertaken.

Where the bilingual approach can play an unequivocally important role is in independent study and distance education with or without the support of the new technologies. As yet the AMES Distance Learning Unit does not use a bilingual approach. However, there is experimentation elsewhere. For example, the Northern Metropolitan TAFE Migrant Women's Learning Centre has produced a Home Study English Literacy Course for Vietnamese women which gives instructions and explanatory notes in Vietnamese but is not Vietnamese literacy oriented; it takes that skill for granted (Sanguinetti and Keating, 1990).

The benefits of the bilingual approach are also beginning to be realised in the workplace sector. In the course of discussing the teaching models developed by the staff involved in the 'Career Advancement for Women in the TCF Industries Project' (Tate, 1990) it was revealed that the writing team would have liked to adopt a bilingual approach. As materials are characterised by high graphic and low verbal content, it would be relatively easy to produce parallel versions in the languages needed.

In the workplace, NESB women can also profit from access to bilingual support outside formal learning situations. They can be helped by less emphasis being placed on superior English language skills where these are not particularly relevant. The ***report on the employment of people***

of non-English speaking background in the Australian Public Service (The Public Service Commission, 1990) gives some detailed information on how this can be done and suggests some of the following strategies:

* the production of multilingual induction/information packages;
* assessment of the skills and experience of NESB staff in their L1 where this is appropriate;
* the piloting of a scheme of individual learning centres in departments;
* the compilation of a register of senior NESB officers ready to advise supervisors and managers who work with NESB staff;
* the promotion of a Plain English policy for all documents;
* the identification of English language skills required;
* the keeping of information on employees on their level of skills in LOTE.

Apart from these recommendations there are other interesting suggestions in the report. These include:

* the use of NESB staff to induct new workers;
* the training of members of interview panels on how to question NESB applicants; and
* the production of a special training/promotion document for NESB staff.

The chances of implementing teacher-centred bilingual education are probably the greatest in the workplace and in community centres and ethnic organisations which offer English tuition because of the probability that ethno-specific groups can be formed. For example, in many community centres (see Springvale Neighbourhood House Incorporated, ***Second Annual Report*** 1990) women form groups which they label with the language they speak such as Turkish or Arabic women's group.

Experience shows that women with low English oracy and literacy skills benefit particularly from bilingual support. Bilingual teaching should therefore serve them well and every effort should be made to offer this type of tuition to such women.

This review of bilingual approaches to the development of bilingual literacy is by no means complete. It is intended to show that the bilingual approach is already used in some courses. If they have been discontinued, this was because of lack of funding and not for lack of interest. It also shows that there are teachers interested in developing a bilingual methodology. By helping bilingual women to become competent biliterates, we not only enhance their self-esteem and career chances but we also create a pool of potential teachers, teacher aides and bilingual workers form among the ranks of the women themselves. This is essential if the bilingual approach is to spread.

Apart from training bilingual staff, technology holds great promise for bilingual learning because it makes the creation of a multilingual learning situation possible. It also alleviates the problem of forming classes because individuals can work independently or in small ethno-specific groups with material suitable for their educational level and English language proficiency. Since videos and computers can be interactive and also produce sound, those not literate in their first language can participate. The great advantage of computer-aided learning is that it can bring bilingual education to a multilingual situation. That is, it can teach subject matter, including skills, using two languages as the mediums of instruction. Most importantly the learner(s) can choose the language of learning at any given moment. This is in harmony with the recurring advice of teachers and researchers that adults should have control of what and how they learn (for example, see Virgona 1989).

Barker and Currie (1988:7) appropriately link the issues of self-directed learning and bilingual learning. They advocate self-directed learning on the grounds that:

> Andragogy, the concept of adult learning as differentiated from child or developmental learning, offers points to be considered by all providers of adult education. Fundamentals of adult learning include considerations such as adult capacity for self-direction, capacity of self-diagnosis of needs, past life experience on which to base learning and a time shift of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application . . . .

Bilingual education, however, is not only a pedagogical but also an access and equity issue. (For supportive arguments, see Yeatman and Bradley 1990).

10. English in the Workplace: Do Women get their Share?

The distribution of women workers across industries is uneven. They tend to be concentrated in industries such as Textiles, Clothing and Footwear (TCF), food processing technology, retail, hospitality and clerical. The United Nations September 1990 Newsletter calls these the 'pink-collar' industries into which women are segregated in the workplace.

In the transitional period of putting award restructuring into place, some industries have been forward thinking and have started offering multiskilling opportunities including ALBE instruction for their ESB and/or NESB workers. The automotive industry is a good example. However, industries relying mainly on a female workforce have, with a few exceptions, shown less interest (This was mentioned by several of the speakers at the Literacy and Industry: Partners in Productivity Conference 1990). In short the private industry/business sector subsidises male training more than female training so that discrimination has already begun before eligibility and selection of individual workers is considered.

Within the female or pink-collar industries, a further factor which disadvantages women is the changing nature of these industries. The trend is towards capital concentration in a few big firms (called 'majors') and a number of smaller firms or subcontractors. Apparently middle-sized firms are in danger of disappearing. Big firms concentrate on high value sophisticated products for which they need functional flexibility associated with a highly skilled stable labour force. It consists of registered and therefore 'visible' workers in whom industry is prepared to invest by supporting their skill development which includes English literacy. In contrast mass-produced cheap products with a short marketing run need a numerically flexible labour force, namely workers who can be hired and fired at short notice. These people work at home away from the employer's premises. The immediate employer is not the big firm but a smaller subcontractor who may or may not register his workers. The masculine possessive adjective is appropriately used here because the majority of these entrepreneurs are males whereas the workers they employ are on the whole females. Those women who are unregistered can be aptly referred to as the 'invisible' workforce. (For further details see Yeatman and Bradley 1990.)

10.1 The split in the labour force

The polarisation of the labour force into visible and invisible workers has serious consequences for NESB women who tend to belong to the latter group. It can be expected that the highly skilled full time employees are considered worthy of educational investment because their skill will benefit a particular enterprise or industry. In contrast, the education of the low skilled casual outdoor workers - many NESB women belong to this group - is of little interest to the employer. They are easily replaceable if not on-shore then off-shore. The increasing practice of employing labour wherever it can be found further disadvantages NESB women in Australia. This situation has arisen as a consequence of the type of products the market demands (Yeatman and Bradley, 1990).

The situation of the outworkers can be illustrated with what is happening in the TCF industry. In this volatile seasonal high fashion area, much reliance is placed on NESB female outworkers who are machinists doing process work at home.

These women rarely belong to a union. They are low skilled, low paid, may or may not be literate in their mother tongue and have probably low oracy and literacy skills in English. Often they are not directly employed by the manufacturer but work for a middleman. Their wages may not be declared. Their chances of receiving employer supported training at present are nil (Yeatman and Bradley, 1990).

10.2 Barriers to accredited certification courses and EWP literacy classes

Yeatman and Bradley (1990) argue that one of the reasons why so many women, irrespective of their educational background and aspirations, are tracked into low paid casual manufacturing jobs is that if married they enter Australia under the 'dependent' category. This means that they are not subject to a points test. Their skills are not assessed and recorded and they do not receive labour market advice. So we do not know what previous work qualifications the majority of migrant women may have. The fact that they use informal networks rather than CES also directs them to unskilled jobs. Once in low socio-economic status jobs, they are trapped there. In principle, upwards job mobility is possible, in practice, it rarely occurs because once these women have a low paid job part-time study leading to a full-time skilled job is practically impossible. Yeatman and Bradley (1990) give the example that women are more likely to be admitted to TAFE machinist courses than to fashion and design courses because of their low level of English. There is no appropriate English bridging course for them. If women want to change careers while working part time, subsidised training is generally not available to them, for that, they must be unemployed.

The training outlook for full-time or core NESB women workers is brighter but not brilliant. It can be reasonably expected that some educational provision, including English literacy upgrading, will be made for them. How adequate the provision will be is uncertain. What we do know is that at present demand far exceeds what is being offered. We also know that demand is less than need because not all workers in need of some form of literacy tuition have the interest or courage to come forward. Not only is placement in classes a problem but also the length of tuition offered. On average a course module is 100 hours. Probably the minimum should be 300. Workers may attend two modules but probably not more. Government and employers need to understand that language learning, including the development of literacy skills, cannot be accelerated beyond a certain point. The time allocated to it at present is based on economics and not on psycholinguistic theory. Providers of English literacy tuition should mount an information campaign to this effect.

Generally, EWP classes are organised on a 'free-standing' modular basis. Such programs are self-contained independent units. They may enable learners to progress to a higher level unit but they are not explicitly planned to form part of a clearly defined course. In this way, they are different from units which are part of a course leading to a certificate, diploma or degree. The modular format is favoured because of its flexibility. Award restructuring might help to organise the modules into a sequence which corresponds to the skill levels specified by skill auditing.

The manner of selecting the participants at present is as follows. An enterprise decides that some of its employees need to improve their English language skills. The staff responsible for personnel invite providers to tender for the delivery of tuition. In selecting providers for this purpose, much depends on the personal network the responsible staff has built up. Since the gradual introduction of the user-pay principle the cost of tuition delivery plays an important role in negotiating. This raises the question of how to ensure that some of the competing providers maintain a high standard. In other words what kind of class/course accreditation procedures can be developed. The concern is not with mainstream providers who have their own institutional mechanism for ensuring appropriate standards but rather with some of the private business providers who could be overly profit-oriented. This is not to suggest that the business sector should be excluded. We consider variety of approaches a virtue. A mechanism for monitoring the quality of teaching, however, must be put into place.

Similarly to women not in employment, there is a group of working women who are prevented by circumstances, cultural constraints or personal inclination to join a class. For them, distance education or independent study, with or without using the new technologies, should offer a solution. The details of such arrangements will be discussed in the 'The new technologies' section.

Once agreement with a provider has been reached the enterprise advertises the envisaged class(es). Various methods of disseminating information are used. Some workers are informed by word of mouth, others through more formal means such as notices and newsletters although print dissemination is inaccessible to those of low level literacy. Often it is not certain that all those in need of classes - women are strongly represented in that group - are aware of the opportunity to upgrade their English language skills. They may not have been told in the first place, or if told in English by, for example the supervisor, they may not have fully understood the importance of responding to the offer.

Some enterprises send all workers who express an interest to be interviewed by provider staff who usually also test them with the help of the ASLPR scale or some other language testing instrument. On the basis of this information the provider selects the participants for a particular class taking such considerations as need, commitment and language competency into account so that a viable class can be formed. Individuals whose language skills are too low or too high compared with those of the prospective class members may be excluded and would have to wait until a group matching their learning needs more closely can be formed. This is regrettable but perhaps understandable. What is of greater concern is the fact that supervisors or other higher ranking personnel select the participants from among the volunteers before they are sent to be interviewed. In this way, workers may be excluded for personal reasons or because of the inconvenience of replacing them or distributing their work among others. Some enterprises are aware of this and in anticipation of the expansion of on-the-job training and future re-organisation of work practices move their workers around so that in some cases multiskilling is already a reality. In such a

situation releasing workers to attend literacy or other classes is not a problem. For example, Rockwell's automotive enterprise is using this strategy successfully. In other instances where an enterprise such as a hospital has many sections in its service sector and where the less busy periods across sectors do not coincide the formation of classes can pose a serious problem. Generally enterprises report that the demand for classes is greater than what is being offered at a particular time. It is evident that not all those women who would profit from classes have access to them.

10.3 Improving NESB women's access to literacy tuition

10.3.1 *Core Workers*

To redress the substantial shortfall in the provision of literacy tuition for women in the workforce a variety of strategies must be used which will be partly different for core and outworkers. Recruitment procedures for full-time employees are being refined by AMES. They include the use of educational counsellors (Economou and Masters, 1989). One model that can be used in advertising literacy classes is that developed by a Migrant Women's Organisation project 'Women in Industry: Contraception and Health' (WICH). This organisation obtains permission to visit an enterprise several times. They talk to the women in their own language and in English, individually and in groups, in the canteen during meal breaks giving them information on health. They distribute multilingual materials, use visual aids, and invite discussion. A multilingual dissemination, counselling group of this kind clearly benefits the women and might help them to overcome difficulties in their personal lives so that their learning and working capacity is enhanced. Solving women's personal problems would also benefit the employer in the form of a more settled workforce which in turn can satisfy better the demands of functional flexibility in production. This is beginning to be recognised. Some employers interviewed in the course of this study mentioned the fact that they occasionally provide private counselling for women workers in need of such help.

One way of improving the situation would be for the female dominated industries to collectively establish a task force for counselling and dissemination of information along the guidelines agreed upon by all the parties concerned, that is industries, unions, providers and NESB women workers.

10.3.2 *Outworkers*

Compared with full-time workers outworkers are much more difficult to reach. Strategies for making initial contact need to be greatly diversified and could include multilingual door-knock campaigns and all the possible forms of advertising using for example, CES, ethnic and religious organisations, schools, neighbourhood shops and stalls in shopping centres, neighbourhood houses, the ethnic media and informal networks. Provision of on-the-spot child care seems to be a priority, so is the proximity of the teaching venue to their home as many of these women are reluctant to move out of their immediate environment but they might go to a neighbouring house or flat. Of course the greatest barrier to participation in tuition is the time spent away from work as this is equivalent to loss of earnings. These women will not be able to attend classes unless an income is

assured for them covering the period of absence from work. This problem could be solved following a model like AUSTUDY. Yeatman and Bradley (1990) speak for many other researchers when as a recurrent theme they mention government responsibility for training migrant women in the workforce. In other words, they argue that public money must be spent on the education of such NESB women.

10.4 Alternative venues/modes of learning

Recruiting outworkers for classes is the first step. Providing them with tuition is another. It involves identifying the time and venue which suit all members of a potential group. If this is not possible alternatives to class tuition are distance learning and/or a mobile classroom. The concept of a mobile classroom is the extension of a learning centre which offers opportunities for independent study. Interestingly Virgona (1989) advocates such centres for all adult language learners. In the case of outworkers instead of installing the required hardware and software in a room in a building it can be housed in a bus or caravan and driven around to small groups and individuals on the model of bookmobiles used by libraries. In this way much more professionally organised teaching/learning can take place than can be offered by the individualised Home Tutor Scheme. This is not a suggestion to reduce this invaluable service which can play a useful role but in different ways with a different type of clientele. This is discussed elsewhere in this report. For the vulnerable group of outworker women, special staff are needed. The teachers should be preferably bilingual or have bilingual support. They should be experts in literacy and have teaching counselling skills.

10.5 Program planning

When the class is formed, the teacher representing the provider draws up the syllabus. This is done taking into account both learner and employer needs, expectations, wishes and the pedagogy judged most suitable. At the end of the course the teacher prepares a comprehensive report which includes the proposed syllabus and a description of what has been achieved. These reports are a necessary and welcome development in the delivery of such contractual educational services. They are the foundation on which articulated courses and their accreditation can be built.

Where tripartite committees have been formed consisting of employer, union/worker and provider representatives, the initial syllabus outlining the course, its aims, its objectives and the linguistic and conceptual content is submitted for consultation and approval. The committee also receives the final report summarising what has been achieved. Thus through report writing the need for accountability is satisfied (For examples of reports, see the files kept by AMES).

Auditing the required work and/or language skills of workers in some industries including the female dominated TCF industry has also begun (see for example Australia: Employment and Skills Formation Council, 1990). But much more research is required in the skill auditing and general language use area to place the preparation of courses on a fully informed basis. Moreover,

safeguards must be put into place so that programs do not become too narrowly vocational. Some of our respondents expressed concern that the implementation of the user-pay principle will give industry the power to demand a narrowly work centred syllabus. (The Melbourne College of Textiles draft materials show how this can be avoided. The issue of a judicial balance between industry specific and general English literacy skills is an important one because of the close connection between study design and certification. Consequently, the Adult Basic Education Certificate will have to satisfy industry's demand for within industry specificity and across industry portability as well as the literacy teachers' and the workers' demand for language used not only in but also out of the workplace.

10.6 Supporting NESB in the workplace

What emerges in The Public Service Commission report and in the report prepared by Yeatman and Bradley is the use of in-house bilingual staff to improve communication in the workplace. It is interesting to compare this view on the value of bilingual staff with employer perception of their usefulness in enhancing business opportunities with clients of NESB in Australia or overseas (see Borland, George and Rado 1989).

Clearly industry has a twofold interest in helping to develop the dual literacy skills of its bilingual workers. First, their usefulness in dealing with the relevant clientele and public, that is the outside world, and second their ability to facilitate in-house communication and co-operation are of enough value to warrant the cost bilingual literacy tuition entails.

10.7 The views of other interested parties

10.7.1 *Industry Training Board*

Leaving the issues of bilingual literacy aside, it is clear that in organising EWP classes there are difficulties to overcome and safeguards to put into place. The Division of Further Education is aware of this and has formed an Industry Basic Education Common Interest Group (IBE-CIG) to monitor developments. The Interest Group Working Party has produced a short paper (1991) recommending a set of principles and practices to the IBE-CIG. The points listed include:

1. Voluntary participation in programs;

2. Equal opportunity of participation in programs;

3. Preservation of confidentiality;

4. Role of tripartite committees;

5. Need to balance employee and employer interests;

6. Opportunities for further study;

7. Teacher training;

8. Composition, size, duration and location of classes;

9. Diversity in the models of delivery (i.e., need to vary teacher centred class based delivery); and

10. Integration of work skill and literacy learning/teaching.

10.7.2 *Employers*

Finally we also canvassed the views of employers. Our sample is biased because we could only talk to spokespersons of employers who have already begun to offer employees EWP classes. The enterprises they represented belonged to the health, metal trades and public service sectors. The personnel who were in a position to discuss management policy with regard to EWP were section managers and staff development personnel and human resources officers. They showed a keen interest in worker education and were proud of existing arrangements. They could see no particular problems including the expenditure worker education involved since their enterprise had already made the necessary budget allocations or if AMES provided the course free, the enterprise was prepared to pay in future.

Although the views listed below are not generalisable to others they do indicate what could be of concern to employers. Points raised during the interviews include:

1. Importance of voluntary participation in programs;

2. Importance of the tripartite steering committee;

3. The availability of ground principles for tripartite committees such as given by the Metal Trades Industry Association;

4. Importance of education in maintaining quality standards in products or services;

5. Importance of education to move into the future using high technology;

6. Importance of rewarding educational success with publicity, ceremony and certification;

7. Flexible working conditions: organising workers into teams so that time release for classes in core working time is not a problem;

8. LOTE tuition for personnel being sent overseas to learn new techniques (e.g., controlling robots);

9. Compliance with the equal opportunity principle;

10. Use of LOTE in the workplace where successful communication is important (e.g., safety notices);

11. Recognition of the bilingual approach to facilitate learning;

12. Recognition of the need for English at work and in private life to be reflected in course content;

13. Interest in upgrading middle management skills, e.g., report writing;

14. Support for TAFE course attendance;

15. Need for information from providers, i.e., register of available courses;

16. Need for retraining workers (follow the example of Sweden);

17. Need for confidentiality;

18. Need for set courses and indication of progression across courses;

19. Employer participation in defining course content;

20. Development of a coherent staff training program (see Veterans Affairs Staff Development Training Program 3rd Quarter 1990);

21. Importance of English for in-house communication;

22. Use of multilingual notices;

23. Ways of improving NESB women's career opportunities;

24. Child care; and

25. Need for both in-house and accredited certification.

Our summary of the TCF Working Party views is much shorter than that of the employers' because we did not report in detail what the former had to say about cost recovery which was one of their major concerns and reported on at length. In comparing the two lists, it becomes evident that there is enough overlap to form the basis for negotiations between the two parties.

Undoubtedly, what happens in the workplace will have an impact on courses in other situations. In particular the introduction of accredited certification necessitated by the direct connection between literacy skills development and promotion will have a standardising effect on course planning and pedagogy. It is therefore of paramount importance that sound guidelines for courses are established and equitable testing measures developed. The groundwork has been done.

11. Curriculum Development and Methodology

11.1 The origins of current language teaching methodology in a nutshell

ESL literacy teaching methodology as a sub-category of language teaching methodology has its roots in linguistic and learning theory. Today the prevailing general learning theory is **process based**. In contrast to previous approaches which have focussed on outcomes, it highlights the activities students engage in. This is congruent with psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic theory which emphasises that language is a system, acquired, developed and maintained through meaningful language use. At the same time, these theories are also concerned with what is acquired. They consider that the basic organisational units of linguistic communication are the coherent and structured sequences of sentences called **discourse forms** or **genres**. An example of a discourse form based language teaching methodology is that being developed by systemic linguists.

As a result of applied linguistics, attention has been shifted in language teaching pedagogy from what the teacher does to student activities which engage the learner in real language use. The main task of the teacher is to set up situations where this can occur.

The earlier version of the language use approach is the communicative method which originated in Wilkins' (1973) notional/functional syllabus sponsored by the Council of Europe. This syllabus and the method associated with it were specially designed to satisfy the immediate everyday and vocational or professional language needs of the guest workers in Europe. Besides the emphasis on successful communication, this methodology highlights the importance of taking learners' needs and wishes into account.

The **language use approach** views the receptive skills of listening and speaking and the productive skills of reading and writing as interactive and therefore promotes activities where these skills alternate as naturally as possible. Consequently, literacy learning should not be an isolated course component but should be part of the total learning experience. In fact, this is usually the case unless the teaching module is expressly oracy oriented. If the learners are literate in their L1,

they are as a rule exposed to writing in English right from the start. There are good reasons for this as written language usually has a stabilising effect, can serve as a memory aid and offers opportunities for independent language practice. In the course of visits for this project, hardly any classes have been observed where there was no reference to a written text. In a comparable way, expressly literacy oriented classes included some oral work as well.

11.2 Summary of current good practice

On the basis of writings on methodology and personal experience we have identified the following elements in good teaching of a second language.

The teacher ensures that:

* the language input is contextualised;
* the language input is meaningful;
* suitable discourse form models are provided;
* constructive feedback is provided;
* ample opportunity for rehearsing and practice is provided;
* activities simulate real life events where possible;
* students become aware of language as a system;
* students have the opportunity for independent learning;
* students have the opportunity to work in groups;
* the tasks set are within the linguistic competence of the learners;
* the tasks are relevant to the learners; and
* learner's wishes are taken into account.

How does this translate into ESL literacy teaching practice?

Strategies that can be adopted include:

* canvassing learners expectations and reasons for attending the class;
* choosing appropriate discourse forms;
* choosing relevant topics with some conceptual value;
* contextualising the discourse forms and activities in terms of purpose, settings and participants;
* making models of discourse forms available at appropriate levels for easy reference;
* indicating to learners how to improve;
* indicating to learners their degree of success;
* making all language practice meaningful;
* ensuring successful completion of activities;
* discussing grammatical elements in terms of the notions they express (e.g., plurality);
* discussing discourse forms in terms of text structure;
* discussing cultural influences on linguistic expressions (e.g., forms of address);
* creating opportunities for independent study;
* planning and supervising group work;
* providing for role play rehearsals;
* setting some experientially based writing tasks;
* setting tasks which involve learners in editing their own and others' writing;
* analysing and evaluating vocational/professional and literary texts with students; and
* reading for fun.

In the course of observing learner groups all the strategies mentioned have been witnessed at least once. Some teachers only used two to three strategies during a particular lesson, others covered a broader range. Given the different training background and experiences of the teachers, it is not surprising that they varied in their awareness of the theoretical underpinnings of the strategies they had adopted. In most cases, the approach was eclectic partly because the materials had been collected from different sources which had used different approaches to teaching.

At present, it is not easy to provide teachers with a comprehensive critical overview of theory and practice in ESL literacy teaching. If such an overview were available, it would make it easier for teachers to adjust their programs to the types of learners they are teaching in terms of language level, conceptual sophistication and learning purpose. For example, it would alert them to the need of varying the discourse forms they introduce to their students so that the women can transcend personal experience writing and learn to handle a broader range of written texts.

11.3 Raising linguistic awareness

Halliday (1985) has given an admirable overview of the different writing systems. His comments on the English system are illuminating. So is his analysis and comparison of spoken and written English. This book is strongly recommended to anyone associated with literacy teaching. Its content is too complex to be summarised here but a few reflections on the nature of literacy learning can be added. One striking difference between oral and written language is the perceptual constraint on processing. In oral language, what is not understood at the moment of listening is lost, it cannot be recaptured at a later time (for example, see Smith 1971), whereas a written text can be read over and over again. The speed of processing in oral language requires a non-conscious control of the language system, it limits how much monitoring and self-correction can take place. In contrast, the written text allows for extensive correction and re-writing with the help of the conscious application of the grammatical and pragmatic rules of the language. In other words, in interacting with written language both conscious and non-conscious linguistic knowledge can support the language user. In literacy classes therefore, talking about the formal aspects of language as they are exemplified by the text in hand is highly desirable. Here formal aspects include the pragmatic markers such as used in cohesion, for example pronouns, ellipsis and connectives in English.

Raising the linguistic awareness of literacy students does not mean a return to traditional grammatical explanations which have proved barriers to learning. The linguistic awareness issue has been looked at in connection with early childhood bilingualism (for example see Ben-Zeev, 1977; Clark, 1978; Edelsky, 1986; Slobin, 1978; Tunmer and Bowey, 1980; Tunmer et al., 1984). It develops faster in bilingual than in monolingual children. This gives the bilinguals an advantage in the acquisition of reading, for example. In adult literacy teaching methodology the role of explicit grammatical and pragmatic knowledge is as yet not sufficiently well researched. This is regrettable because time and energy could be saved if some language universals and the basic

features of the English language and spelling system were understood by the learners. For example, knowledge of some morphophonemic rules in English would help in spelling many words extended by suffixes and prefixes. There is no need to memorise the spelling of such words as they occur in the text, the application of the appropriate rule when editing or writing is sufficient. It must be remembered that many adults have difficulty in memorising. It is therefore important to reduce the memorisation load for them. This can be done on the basis of spelling patterns and derivational rules in English.

The difficulty of learning literacy skills for NESB women is enhanced by the fact that they are interlanguage or non-standard speakers of English. It is usually assumed that beginning writers use their oral language and personal experiences as the basis of their writing. The experiential approach to writing, popular with many teachers, explores this fact. This raises the question how to convert the non-standard written form into standard English without overloading the writer with linguistic information and destroying her sense of ownership and self-respect. Clearly, corrections must be selective and gradual in a direction that makes linguistic sense. For this to happen the teacher needs the necessary theoretical and practical tools.

The development of a coherent linguistic awareness component of literacy pedagogy requires both linguistic and pedagogical knowledge and should therefore be undertaken by a team of experts. It must be stressed that this type of consciousness raising is not to be equated with teaching theoretical linguistics or even linguistic terminology. The mode of teaching must be carefully tuned to the learners' intellectual and linguistic experiences and expectations both in the mother tongue and in English. The work is urgent. Fortunately, we are confident that the two national projects on teacher development and language teaching pedagogy will provide sufficient information on this matter.

11.4 The use of frameworks in curriculum development

As a result of language use and needs based curriculum design teachers have been busy designing specific courses for each group they teach. In view of the brevity of the majority of courses this amounts to a very heavy work load. It is not surprising that teachers complain about lack of time yet they need time to spend on further professional development. The latter is important because of the changes in teaching conditions the new technologies will bring about.

Individual course development means discarding textbooks. Teachers accept the lack of textbook support because of the benefits of individualised courses. The learners, however, do look for the sort of support a textbook can give. This is reasonable and even desirable. Learners might want to revise material, check on certain points or even forge ahead on their own. As a rule in teacher designed courses all they take home are the texts studied and accompanying photocopied worksheets. They have no reference material dealing with language given to them.

This situation has arisen because of the apparent great diversity of courses needed. We believe that this diversity can be reduced to a limited number of course foci. An analysis of in-house course descriptions and reports and the information gathered from our various respondents has led us to the following tentative categorisation of courses according to their foci. Courses are:

* function based to serve everyday communications needs;
* vocational/professional oriented;
* sentence grammar based;
* text grammar based (genre approach);
* study still based;
* general knowledge/skill based;
* specific knowledge/skill based;
* intercultural communication oriented;
* oriented towards empowerment, raising self-esteem;
* concerned with language as enjoyment, as literature; and
* concerned with women's issues such as health and trade union support for women.

The list may have to be adjusted on the basis of investigating required course types further but it is not expected that it would have to be substantially expanded. The value of such a list is that it can serve as the basis for ESL literacy curriculum frameworks. Models of second language curriculum frameworks already exist. For ESL, there are the frameworks produced by the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research and for LOTE there are the documents produced by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board (VCAB) in the form of the VCE LOTE study design and curriculum development support materials. These documents have the potential of reducing the labour of curriculum development.

It must be remembered that language is not an object of study in itself, except for linguists: it is a communication tool. A language teaching syllabus therefore needs to import the topics to be studied from other subject areas. One of the weaknesses of syllabi in the past has been their often trivial content. Today some of the teacher developed materials continue to have this weakness in

design because they lack a conceptual framework, that is they do not have unifying themes or topics on the basis of which they explore a particular subject area. Working within well conceived frameworks overcomes this difficulty. Further it ensures that all aspects of a syllabus are taken into account and integrated.

Frameworks must be flexible so that on the basis of the models they provide, teachers can adopt and adapt the topics and activities to suit their learners or choose their own. The two frameworks mentioned above vary somewhat in this respect. The National Curriculum Project frameworks are , if so desired, ready for immediate use. They provide all the detail including actual copies of the resource materials to be used. This of course does not preclude the use of other materials. The VCAB frameworks are less detailed. Their merit is that by means of Unit Outlines and Topic Tables they give an easy overview of the components of the syllabus for a range of topics using the same framework.

Even if the current frameworks are not adopted, they have played a useful role in making the components of a language syllabus explicit. In this respect the ALL Project (Australian Language Levels Guidelines, 1988) deserves a mention. Today, every well planned syllabus must show the discourse forms or genres, the topics, activities, linguistic elements, resources and the work to be achieved. There is evidence that the importance of working with thematic units is being recognised. A good example is the Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE (Collingwood Campus) Bilingual Women's Curriculum Project which has organised its materials under headings such as health, study skills, diary writing and work.

It must be stressed that we welcome the disappearance of textbooks and the advent of the teacher as curriculum developer. If the latter works within a sound framework the dual requirements of good teaching practice and on-going teacher development will be well served. Undoubtedly teachers' involvement in curriculum development is an excellent strategy for enhancing their understanding of the learning/teaching process.

For curriculum development to be successful, teachers need to develop skills for adapting frameworks to suit the diverse needs of learners within a class because many groups are not homogeneous with respect to needs. This fact and the increased reliance on self-sustaining groups in other situations such as the use of the new technologies or participation in reading circles and other study groups make the technique of sub-grouping a most important teacher attribute.

11.5 Establishing priorities in curriculum materials development

With the help of existing curriculum frameworks, teachers can continue to develop courses themselves. Alternatively, with the help of the designated DFE staff, they could work together in groups. The latter method is often more efficient in speeding up the process and in producing a higher quality study design.

Apart from developing teacher initiated topics, DFE should organise a series of curriculum workshops for hitherto largely unexplored areas in curriculum development. These should concern frameworks rather than their illustration with a detailed course design. Frameworks are urgently needed for: bilingually taught courses, beginner courses for L1 illiterates, courses designed for independent groups operating with occasional teacher support, courses using the new technologies and courses developing L1 literacy. Besides interested teachers, relevant experts should be included in the working groups such as applied linguists and experts in using and perfecting the new technologies.

In order to ensure that the materials are of a suitable standard, an evaluation committee should be set up by DFE. If materials are approved they should be entered in a database through which they can become accessible to teachers in their entirety or in part. This system ensures immediate availability and solves the storage problem. If the materials are judged below standard, arrangements can be made to upgrade them.

Besides teaching materials, leisure reading is also required. These texts could be written by anyone who is a fluent writer in English, in a LOTE or in both. DFE could call for such materials by arranging competitions to be judged by a panel of experts in a variety of genre writings. These materials could also be entered into a database. It is hoped that NESB women would be encouraged to participate in the competition. Those who prove to be creative writers could be given assistance for the final editing of their work. ***Network*** (Quarterly Newsletter of the Rural Women's Network) is a good example of how women's writing can be brought to a publishable standard.

12. Educational Technology

Treloar divides educational technology, that is the tools used for teaching and learning, into three groups: low, intermediate and complex or high level technology (Treloar, 1990:122-145).

12.1 Categories

Low level technology includes paper, pencils, pens and typewriters. **Intermediate** technology includes overhead projectors, radios, cassette tape recorders and audio tapes, video cassette recorders, video tapes and cameras. **High level** technology includes television, computers, computer peripherals such as light pens and touch sensitive monitor screens, teleconferencing equipment extended by telex machines and other devices.

Anderson and colleagues call these the **new generation technologies**. The peripherals include optical laser discs in the form of audio compact discs and videodiscs, CD-ROM drives and discs and Hyper Card which can link various forms of media giving rise to hypermedia. (For details of these technologies, see (Anderson et al., 1990:24-30.) The advantages of these technological

innovations can be summed up as higher quality sound or image, greater capacity to store information, ease of data manipulation, almost immediate access to information in a non-linear fashion, which is similar to the way one thinks.

Another way of grouping technologies is by their accessibility in the home, the teaching venues and in special centres. Radio and television are eminently accessible. Most migrant homes have them. Writing materials and audio and video recorders are also within the reach of many NESB women. At most mainstream provider teaching venues, teachers have an array of equipment at their disposal including overhead projectors, audio recorders, video cameras and recorders. If teachers wish to take ordinary photographs, they usually use their own cameras. Community/ethnic association venues often lack all or some of this electronic equipment, so do many workplace venues. In such instances teachers tend to bring their own audio recorder to class. Computers are as a rule not part of classroom equipment. They are housed in special self-access or language centres. Because of this, it is difficult to integrate their use into the flow of a lesson. Apart from computers, high level technologies are a rarity. They are only to be found in some experimental TAFE or tertiary institution centres. Yet the potential of the high technologies and within that the new technologies is impressive and highly relevant to NESB women learners.

Teachers have not been clamouring for equipment because of past experiences which have shown that equipment does not replace teachers. Language learning must be interactive and must occur in a social context. Independent study with a tape, video or computer does not provide these essential conditions. This mode of learning is being particularly rejected for NESB low literacy women learners. Teachers need to look beyond this narrow interpretation of technology-aided instruction because of new developments both in teaching styles and the new technologies. Teachers must be shown how to enter into partnership with the new technologies so that their students can derive maximum benefit from them.

12.2 Solutions

The new technologies offer solutions to many of the problems associated with literacy tuition for NESB women. The problems they can solve are:

* provision of classes, too many applicants for too few places;
* need for special care, equipment, e.g., traumatised, disabled women;
* specialist language needs, e.g., language for childbirth;
* time-tabling, few after-hour classes available;
* slow learners who need extended practice;

* fast learners who want an accelerated program;
* learners who have reached a plateau;
* too many proficiency levels in the one group;
* learners who are tied to small children;
* geographic isolation;
* isolation for cultural or personal reasons; and
* provision of bilingual learning.

One of the reasons why the new technology is not used more is its high cost. D'Cruz (1990) who has investigated course delivery to rural schools by means of telematics stresses the need for a flexible multi-purpose communication system. In other words, he advocates a system which can serve a variety of users, for example schools as well as business firms or other organisations. Of course, sharing facilities would lower their cost. Another way of lowering the cost, as Anderson et al. (1990) forcibly argue, is to increase demand.

The greater availability of computers not only at mainstream provider venues but also in neighbourhood houses and community learning centres is due to the Victorian Government's distribution of JAC computers (Choice and opportunity for women, 1990). JAC is the popular acronym for Job and Course Explorer, a computerised index or directory of job and training opportunities. The plan aims to improve the status and employment opportunities of women and is an important component of the Government's Social Justice Strategy. It is suggested that in addition to its dissemination of information function, the JAC computer could give NESB women access to high technology, namely computer-aided learning.

Treloar (1990) has briefly reviewed the use and merits of the different technologies. Anderson et al. (1990) have discussed the use of technology for adult literacy teaching in Australia in some detail including the available software. Consequently, here we are going to limit the discussion to how the technologies can facilitate bilingual learning and to the effective functioning of study groups such as reading circles.

In simplest terms the new technologies are either the extension of the telephone or the computer. The former makes teleconferencing possible. South Australia was mainly responsible for developing the DUCT (Diverse Use of Communications Technology) system which allows several people in several locations to talk together. In essence, the system is a loud speaking telephone

with multiple microphones. A facsimile machine and computer can also be attached. Teleconferencing is much used today in distance education in rural areas to teach students and train tutors (for example, see Waterhouse, et al. n.d.) and also in mainstream literacy teaching (for example, see Stewart 1990:4). It is time to use it for various types of isolated NESB women, but above all for women who wish to learn bilingually. Teleconferencing makes it easier to form an ethnospecific group with an appropriate bilingual teacher or teacher team because it does not matter how far they live from each other. It is, however, desirable that some face-to-face social meeting is arranged at least once for the group.

As Anderson et al. (1990:27) point out:

> There are a number of devices and attachments, commonly called peripherals, which linked to the computer can extend its capabilities in different ways . . . (These are) light pens, touch screens, and various speech cards and circuits, all of which may be applied in literacy teaching and learning.

One Australian invention resulting from the combination of attachments is the **Lexiphon** which with the use of a light pen has a voice production capacity. The hardware includes a CD player and the software a CD disk and barcoded accompanying text. By stroking the barcodes with the light pen, the reader can make the text audible. What he/she hears is not synthesised computer speech but normal human voice speaking with clarity and the exact contextual intonation. The Lexiphon is more than an audio or read along book, it is a teaching device which offers various types of useful and imaginative exercises to the reader. (For a detailed account of the flexible use of the Lexiphon see Anderson et al., 1990:75-89). Because it is possible to make barcoded books multilingual, the Lexiphon can lend invaluable support to bilingual teaching. As yet, however, there are no Lexiphon bilingual literacy materials available. This is a task that should receive priority in the development of curriculum materials.

Today, apart from Lexiphon and talking books for the blind, which use synthesised speech, there are also software computer packages with a natural voice component. These already exist in some languages in a bilingual format which can be manipulated at the learner's discretion and so lends itself ideally to bilingual learning.

A more powerful technology is the **interactive videodisc**, the most advanced form of which is the **hypermedia**. This equipment combines a computer with a touchscreen, a videodisc and a Hyper Card. The latter makes it possible for information to be stored on cards and linked to synthetic or digitised speech, the contents of a CD-ROM, and the myriads of images and sounds stored on a videodisc. The user may navigate or browse through this information by pressing buttons or touching the screen.

A good example of an interactive videodisc is the very popular **Aussie Barbie** used by AMES. It would be highly desirable to develop a whole range of programs using this technique because of its extraordinary flexibility with respect to language use and its adaptability to bilingual learning.

Radio and television have responded to the call to raise literacy awareness in Australia. For example the ABC is marketing a series of four programs ***The Experience of Reading*** which is a guide for people interested in helping adults with literacy. The ABC also broadcasts book reading programs which seem very popular. With respect to television, several of Australia's most popular soap operas have picked up the theme of literacy (***Further Education***, 1990:20-21). These programs are publicity oriented, they do not directly teach literacy unlike the BBC programs in Britain which have been produced in co-operation with the Open University and the National Campaign for adult literacy. Irrespective of the quality of the British programs they are not interactive. Such programs can be rendered more useful, however, if transferred to videodisc so that they can be viewed in the learner's home at leisure, repeatedly, stopped and replayed in sections to suit the learner's needs.

Importantly one of the Green Paper's main proposals suggests (DEET Media Release, 1990a:2):

> the delivery of literacy education and foreign language programs, especially for adults through down time on either the ABC or SBS television networks. Such education programs could be recorded on VCRs (about 60 per cent of Australian homes own VCR units) and could be an effective and inexpensive way to deliver literacy education.

Anderson et al. also investigated the use of subtitled television programs in literacy teaching. The ABC, Channels 7, 9 and 10 produce a selection of subtitled programs for the deaf but they are not being used for literacy purposes. Yet it seems this technique be useful for L2 literacy learners. Research in Canada (Holobo et al., 1984) and discussed by Johnstone, admittedly carried out with primary-age children, showed that some subtitling combinations with the original soundtrack enhanced learning. The combinations were:

* normal subtitling, i.e., talk in L2, with subtitles in L1;
* bimodal input, i.e., talk and subtitles in L2; and
* reverse subtitling, i.e., talk in L1, with subtitles in L2.

(Johnstone, 1989:191).

Comprehension and recall in L2 were the criteria. The rank order of successful strategies was: reverse, bimodal and lastly normal. It seems that the auditory input reinforced the visual (written)

one. It is the latter that was filed away, recalled and then reconstructed in spoken form by the learners. In the Australian context, this means that NESB literacy students are well served if they watch subtitled films on SBS with a soundtrack in their mother tongue. They would be even better served if these films were made available to them on video. Of course, caution is in order because the findings may not be generalisable to adults. Research of this topic would be highly desirable as watching feature films would be a pleasurable and by implication an effective literacy learning strategy.

Because the new technologies can be used bilingually and have a voice component, they lend themselves particularly well to teaching women who are not literate in their L1. We believe that the interactive videodisc with a touchscreen is a most useful tool for these women because it does not require any initial keyboard skills. The equipment is immediately accessible to the learner and the response or feedback is instantaneous.

A most important role of computer technology is of course the establishment of a database and the retrieval of data. Our study shows that different kinds of database are required some of which have already been established and are kept up to date. Examples are JAC, the AMES database of adult ESL courses, the Australian Adult Basic Education Research database and the CAE Discussion Groups book list. If reading circles for NESB women are set up they will need their own database of reading materials. It can be expected that the types of database will increase in a way that will make it desirable for adult learners to access them directly the way JAC seems to operate. This could be done by using the Telecom Discovery service. The owner of the database has to establish and maintain it. The annual rate of membership is $100. Users need **a PC and modem** plugged into an ordinary telephone. The software needed comes with the subscription. Apart from an ordinary telephone call users pay $12 per hour and 6 cents per 1000 characters of data wherever they are. The existing Telecom Discovery provides a sophisticated nation-wide communication network. It would be advantageous for everybody concerned with literacy to be able to access the different types of database in the same way. It is conceivable that the Telecom Discovery service would allow the co-operation of organisations so that they would not only be able to use each others database but also help update them.

The accessibility of the different types of equipment does not always pose a problem. For example the DUCT system and the Lexiphon are portable and so can be used in the home. The computer is increasingly part of the equipment at the learning venue, so that it is becoming more accessible. Lap-top computers can be carried around to the women's homes. The interactive video and hypermedia can only be accessed in special learning centres but this can be changed. It is clear to the supporters of educational technology that on the model of bookmobiles, mobile caravans or buses, equipped with the relevant technological devices, can be brought to the vicinity of the NESB women's homes. Portable equipment, such as a modem, can be left with the women on loan on the model of the Open University in Britain which has a system of lending tape recorders. As

has been mentioned earlier, the greater the demand the cheaper the provision of technological devices will become.

It is our contention that although the new technology will not solve the problem of satisfying the increasing demand for literacy tuition it should reduce it to some degree. This justifies the required capital investment.

13. Extension of Study Time: Reading Circles

There is a danger in interpreting the current language use approach to teaching literacy in a too narrowly utilitarian manner. Language teaching traditionally focussed on developing general literacy skills, teaching high culture and sometimes also on entertaining. The swing in second language teaching generally from narrative and, at a more advanced stage, literary texts to transactionally, vocationally and professionally useful texts often has been extreme. In the process of changing methodologies, it has been forgotten that to be maintained and developed further language skills must be constantly practised outside formal lessons and that this can be done in a pleasurable way. The degree of mother tongue language loss over time by even highly literate people who do not use their L1 regularly is readily observable in Australia. The detrimental effect of lack of practice is quite remarkable in view of the fact that literacy stabilises competency in a language. Clearly, extra-curricular language use is important.

Another reason for advocating language practice outside a formal learning context is the limited duration of many courses, often making it impossible for learners to achieve the desired standard for undertaking further education or for obtaining the envisaged employment. Our survey results support this view.

The usual way for people to use their literacy skills outside working hours is reading for pleasure. The question is how to explore this type of practice for NESB women.

CAE has provided a model through its Discussion Program, a form of distance education which has been in operation for 46 years. It provides books and discussion guidelines for interested groups of readers of intermediate or higher literacy levels. The emphasis is on sharing the reading experience with other group members thereby adding a social dimension to reading. According to Lee Dow (1989), other advantages are the spontaneous formation of groups and the self-directing and non-tutored mode of operating them. This model could be adapted to servicing what we propose to call 'reading circles' for NESB women of different levels of literacy proficiency. In their case, the social component of this type of reading activity is particularly important.

The CAE model largely relies on regional networking to attract readers, a method which seems to be successful and which saves costs. Its reliance on the print media also makes it a relatively low cost operation. Over the years, it has developed an efficient administrative system, some of which is computer based. Participation in a group is voluntary and 95 per cent (190 figures quoted by Lee Dow 1989) of the membership are women. The operation of the groups relies on high quality materials and discussion notes and, most importantly, on total self-direction, although some telephone contact with a tutor can occur. The question is whether the structure of group discussions needs modification for NESB women's groups, particularly with respect to a nominated discussion leader. There are two models developed for EWP using self-directing group strategies which might provide guidelines in this respect.

13.1 Model 1: Melbourne College of Textiles Outreach Program

In its introduction to the program the Students' Manual states that:

> Students in the Outreach program work as mechanics, technicians, machine operators, supervisors, leading hands, middle managers, and administrators.
>
> An important part of the program is that students meet and study in a group or 'learning circle' in the workplace.
> (n.d.:4)

The College provides the students with the necessary learning materials in the form of a booklet accompanied by a workbook which is regularly corrected and serves as an instrument of ongoing feedback and assessment. Initially students receive a manual which contains the necessary information about the nature of the course, the operation of a group, the work to be submitted, certification procedures, career options and support services including the occasional visits of a tutor, and counselling and library services. The emphasis is on flexibility so that different student needs can be accommodated. For example there is no set time limit for completing the course; this is left to the discretion of the group.

13.2 Model 2: Peer Tutoring in Small Companies

Another model of a peer tutoring scheme is that being developed by Virgona (personal communication) who considers this method of learning particularly suitable for the needs of small company employees.

The model stipulates a permanent peer tutor selected by the learners. The tutor is trained and supervised by the teacher who visits the group regularly and gives the tutor step by step instructions. Such a model is more directive of the group than the previous one but provides greater professional support.

It seems to us that reading circles for migrant women need more direction and tutor contact than those offered by CAE but less than the EWP models stipulate. The occasional attendance of a bilingual worker who could be trained to be a discussion leader would be essential. This might be a suitable task for volunteers.

In setting up a reading circle, various options beside the management of groups have to be taken into account. The first decision concerns the provider of the service, and whether it should be organised by a central body on the model of the CAE Discussion program or whether it should be the responsibility of regional library services. The latter is the more viable option as some library services, for example, the Moonee Valley Regional Library (Nineteenth Annual Report, 1990) already has a Migrant Services Department focussing on reading material in languages other than English. Such a department could be extended to house 'easy' reading materials in English which could be distributed to reading circles in boxes adopting the system used by CAE. Such a system simplifies cataloguing and facilitates the circulation of the materials among libraries, thereby reducing the size of the collection. At the same time the existing stocks of books in migrant languages could be expanded to contain multiple copies of the most popular titles. This would make it possible for NESB women to form LOTE reading circles and so profit from the intellectual, social and affective advantages reading and discussion in their mother tongue can offer. This experience should encourage the women subsequently to form English language reading circles.

An alternative method to keeping sets of books in boxes would be to ask reading circle members to buy their own copies. This is not advocated, however, because research shows (Ashby and Whitehead, 1988) that migrant readers rely on libraries rather than on bookshops for reading in their L1. There is no reason to believe that this would not be the case for L2, as many NESB persons are of lower SES and may not be able to afford to buy books.

The selection of titles for building up a LOTE collection requires some research beginning with the gathering of data on the larger ethnolinguistic groups resident in the region. Research is also needed on their reading tastes which can vary considerably across groups in type and range. Ashby and Whitehead (1988) who surveyed the reading preferences of Greek, Italian, Polish, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese borrowers from the Moonee Valley Regional Library Service found a general interest in lighter fiction, but this was not the case for all user groups when examined individually.

Ascertaining the reading preferences of NESB women borrowers is not only important for establishing a suitable LOTE language collection, but is also useful for putting together an English language collection. Both collections need to cater for a range of interests and reading proficiency levels. Selection for those with intermediate and higher reading proficiency should cause no problem for experienced librarians. In the case of LOTE books, the assistance of appropriate

bilingual workers whose services could be shared across libraries might be required.

The situation for low level L1 readers is more difficult. The solution for providing reading materials would entail the commissioning of fluent writers in the various languages selected to write interesting fiction and non-fiction in simple language. Even if the texts are kept very short, this is an enormous undertaking requiring long-range planning. However, if the proposed compulsory LOTE learning is introduced into schools and if TAFE also expands its teaching of languages, such book collections will constitute an important support system for younger students as well. This would warrant support from the relevant federal and state bodies.

With respect to the English language collection for low level adult ESL readers, the situation is easier. There is already a range of materials available for such readers as distinct from books for adolescents who are slow readers. The adult materials include books specifically written for ESL readers, as well as provider in-house publications which document the writing skills developed by a particular group during their literacy course. Such writing often takes the form of personal accounts, but not exclusively; it includes other types of writing as well, such as poems, descriptions and factual accounts. Other types of publication such as large print books (distributed by TAFE Off-campus Network) and talking or soundbooks can also provide accessible reading for NESB women. These publications are often reviewed and advertised in newsletters and journals such as ***Fine Print***.

There are also the materials promoted by the National Library of Australia for people with disabilities and advertised in the newsletter ***Link-up***. It is not suggested that new NESB women readers should be equated with the physically or mentally disabled. The point is that here is a source of simplified texts that could also be used for NESB women. The materials do not only include literacy readers but also a newspaper ***News Review*** and a weekly news bulletin ***8 sidor***, as well as read-along kits with modified reading speeds and supertext films and videos. Supertexts do more than supply subtitles, they also give background information and indicate the speaker by means of colour coding.

Other types of publications which require somewhat higher level literacy skills are the simplified readers of the English classics widely used in countries where learning English is of great importance for educational and economic reasons, as in Singapore. A number of English publishers specialise in the abridged versions of well-known English novels so that these are readily available.

The simplification of existing texts is ongoing in Australia too. An example is ***Good News for New Readers*** which is a graded series of illustrated Bible short stories advertised in ***Fine Print*** (1990: 12(5):23) by James Evangelidis for the Bible Society in Australia.

Another approach to facilitating reading in English is a bilingual approach. The strategy is for the women to read and discuss a translated bestseller and then read the English original and discuss it in English. This method would make accessible to them a higher level text than would otherwise be the case.

Just as the establishment of LOTE book collections implies material development, so does an English book collection for low reading level NESB women. (It seems that the more advanced levels can be catered for with what is available). The types of reading required for low level readers would have to be investigated (see Ashby and Whitehead, 1988) before projects for producing leisure reading materials are commenced. Ashby and Whitehead found that migrant readers like fiction, biography, travel, history, practical subjects, magazines and newspapers such as the ***Australian***, edited for the purpose. If some of the books were produced multilingually as barcoded audio-print publications, it would make it possible for the women to use their dual language skills when confronted with a comprehension problem. Barcoded books can be seen as a variant of soundbooks which rely on tapes; they are, however, more flexible and simpler to handle.

The provision of reading materials is only the first step. The next task is to provide a high quality stimulating discussion guide for each book.

The provision of reading materials is one prerequisite for forming reading circles. Another is the forming of groups. In other words, the targeted women have to be informed of the scheme. One already tried practice (Moonee Valley Regional Library Service) is to arrange tours of the library for ESL literacy classes in the region. If that is not possible an alternative method is to visit classes while in session or during refreshment breaks to discuss and distribute information about the reading circle in the women's mother tongue and in English. Trained bilingual workers could carry out this task.

As a preparation for independent group reading, teachers could arrange a short trial run for a discussion group. The choice of the reading text should be negotiated. The text could be read in class or set as homework with the provision of discussion questions. The whole group could share a text or divide into sub-groups choosing different texts according to their various interests. Participants should be shown how to act as discussion leaders.

If the women show interest, arrangements could be made to form a reading circle. Once a group is established, it is essential that the services of a reading tutor are made available to advise on the choice of reading materials, answer question, help to solve problems and visit the group on one or two occasions. The group also needs a secretary and, if the group so desires, a discussion leader. The selection of the latter should be left to the group.

Where members of a reading circle are experienced readers, they could order their books for the month from an annotated catalogue. If they are 'new' readers, they may need help. This can be done by servicing them with a bookmobile so that they can inspect the books before they make their choice. Since NESB women are often housebound, a delivery service to their meeting place is important. This can be staffed by volunteers who, if trained, can also act as discussion facilitators.

If the scheme proves successful the next step would be to pair ESB and NESB literacy reading circles so that they are reading the same books in the relevant NES culture setting. When the groups meet, they could help each other by elucidating meaning with the help of the ESB group and by dealing with the culture specific aspects with the help of the NESB group. This would place the NESB group on an intellectually equal footing with their ESB counterparts.

It is also envisaged that as the literacy skills of some reading circle members develop they will become volunteer facilitators for lower level literacy groups. Since reading circles are considered a leisure activity it should be possible to hold meetings in the evenings or at weekends, if this suits the women better.

Reading circle membership places a certain obligation on participants to spend some time reading. For those who cannot commit themselves to extended reading, CAE has been experimenting with topic-centred discussion groups. These groups are provided with brief reading texts dealing with a topic. The texts are a mixture of narrative, expository prose and poems and are accompanied by discussion notes. The materials are distributed as a set of ten topics. Unfortunately, this scheme is not particularly successful which may be due to the topics chosen or the types of texts or the manner of presentation. An intellectually less demanding approach and a more colourful presentation with a very brief but more unified text might make the approach more popular. Clearly the nature of the stimulus material for discussion needs further investigation. In order to reach a greater range and number of women, it might be important to reduce the amount of preparatory reading for some and yet retain the benefits of reflection and discussion.

Establishing reading circles is obviously a major task but not an impossible one because we know in sufficient detail how it should be done. CAE can provide the theoretical and practical model. DFE has the expertise and mechanism through ARIS to set up a series of workshops, some of which could be designated for developing reading materials and various discussion notes. Municipal libraries have the expertise to handle sets of books and books in LOTE. They have experience in advertising their services through personal contact, in making their services more accessible to less mobile readers through bookmobiles and housebound deliveries. Teachers are gaining expertise in setting up self-directing groups of learners. The new technologies make it possible to offer the women bilingual reading and various types of oral support in reading.

DFE inspired mechanisms for co-operation with libraries already exist in the form of the ***Victorian Libraries Adult Literacy Project*** and the National International Literacy Year project entitled ***Public Libraries Data Collection of Materials*** which is a joint venture of the Australian Library and Information Association Literacy and Public Libraries Sections in agreement with the Division and the Library Services Unit.

The long term beneficial effects of maintaining and developing the reading skills of NESB women in English through reading circles should justify the expenditure such a scheme entails. At the same time, the reading skills of women in their mother tongue, at both the basic and more advanced levels, can be enhanced and the contact of the NESB women with English can be significantly increased.

14. Staff Development

For the purposes of this discussion it is useful to identify the different personnel participating in ESL literacy teaching according to their professional qualifications and teaching activities. Personnel includes **teachers, instructors, workplace trainers, teacher aides** and **volunteer tutors**.

The professionalisation of teachers in Australia since the middle of this century has drawn attention to the group of individuals who are teaching without being qualified teachers. With the expanding demands by adult education, there is increased reliance on unqualified and/or unpaid teachers. Many programs could not exist without them. The Home Tutor Scheme is a good example.

14.1 Teachers

It can be said that the majority of ESL teachers are qualified in their subject but few of them are specialists in teaching ESL literacy to adults who are not literate in their first language. Some of the literacy specialists in the qualified teacher group are primary school teachers with no adult education qualifications. The latter point is important as adult and child learning needs and strategies vary considerably.

Some trained ESL teachers are bilingual but not all of these have the opportunity to use their bilingual skills in teaching literacy.

14.2 Instructors

Given the recognition that language spans the whole of the curriculum, it follows that subject specialists also teach language. In the TAFE colleges, for example, many of these 'teachers' are skilled trades people without teacher qualifications apart from experience in a trade or some other specialist area. To distinguish them from trained teachers, for the purposes of staff development programs we shall call them 'instructors'.

14.3 Trainers

As the educational component of award restructuring is gradually put into place the workplace learning demands will grow enormously. It is understood that it will not be possible to fully staff all potential learning groups in all areas with qualified teachers. Industry employees, for example, factory floor supervisors, but other personnel at managerial level as well, will have to be involved (see The Public Service Commission proposed guidelines, 1990). Some employees have assumed the role of trainers before. Now it must be ensured that this role is officially recognised and regulated and in some instances extended to powers of skills verification. Workers who possess and exercise such training skills should get credit for this contribution to the workplace. Some industries, notably the TCF, see merit in this and wish to include peer teaching, particularly in the bilingual mode, in skill auditing.

14.4 Teacher aides

Teacher aides are bilinguals with various previous teaching qualifications and experience ranging from none to extended pedagogical study and practice. What characterises them as a group is that they have no clearly articulated career structure. Nevertheless, there are some who have been able to combine their job with study and have become fully qualified teachers. For such individuals, this occupation can prove a convenient stepping stone into the professions. Others do not want to or cannot have such career aspirations because for them the gaining of qualifications would be a lengthy and impractical task.

14.5 Volunteers

Volunteers are a heterogeneous group. They range from being fully trained with ESL speciality to being totally inexperienced in teaching. They also vary in age and include retired persons.

Diversity in teaching personnel must be reflected in a variety of staff development provisions.

14.6 Models of staff development

ESL literacy staff development is now receiving due attention at the national level. There are two major projects under way. One research team headed by Professor Frances Christie (Northern Territory University) is focussing on the provision of English literacy education - first and second language - for primary and secondary teachers. The other is the Co-ordinating Agency for Training Adult Literacy Personnel in Australia (CATALPA). This is a joint project of the University of Technology in Sydney and La Trobe University in Melbourne.

Whatever the outcomes of these projects will be, it is expected that tertiary institutions will offer beside their diploma and degree courses, seminar/workshops and other in-service activities for interested teachers. Likewise it is hoped that AMES with its considerable expertise in in-servicing will further expand this aspect of its function and make it available to other trained staff not in its employment.

Seeing that the training prospects of qualifying and qualified teachers are being investigated at the national level, the staff development models we propose concern the unqualified groups, namely, instructors, trainers, teacher aides and volunteers. The basic common model to be adopted is in-servicing through a series of seminar/workshop sessions. The principles underlying all sessions will be the same and so will be some of the procedures. But there will be variation in content, frequency of sessions and the viability of continued subsequent support.

It is assumed that the staff development section of DFE will have a designated sub-section to organise and monitor the proposed in-service arrangements especially designed to benefit NESB women.

In-Service Model for Unqualified Tutors

1a Task	Identification of target group or groups
1b Action	DFE selects the group or groups
2a Task	Formation of steering committee
2b Action	FE invites experts and representatives of the prospective clientele to join the steering committee
3a Task	Drafting of seminar/workshop framework
3b Action	Elected sub-committee produces the framework
4a Task	Identification of speakers/leaders
4b Action	Steering Committee contacts prospective contributors
5a Task	Planning the program
5b Action	Contributors meet as a program committee to draw up the program and identify pre-attendance activities. DFE produces the program package.
6a Task	Seminar/workshop publicity and processing of applications
6b Action	DFE posts relevant information with pre-attendance activity packages to prospective seminar/workshop members
7a Task	Provision of variety in the conduct of sessions
7b Action	Steering Committee to ensure that the program offers variety in activities including the use of technology in teaching and learning
8a Task	Provision of continuity
8b Action	The program committee plans and sets tasks for the intervals between sessions. These could involve researching in pairs, groups or individually
9a Task	Creating the opportunity of sharing experience
9b Action	During each workshop/seminar session participants are given the opportunity to report in various ways on work done, experiences, problems and their solutions.

10a Task	Provision of support
10b Action	DFE to arrange consultative services during and after the seminar/workshop series
11a Task	Developing networks
11b Action	DFE to help participants to set up a mechanism by which they can continue to co-operate with and profit from each other
12a Task	Extending networks
12b Action	DFE to set up a mechanism of networking with non-seminar/workshop participants working in the same field

14.7 Guidelines for seminar/workshops

Some topics are relevant to all types of seminar/workshop participants, others will be clientele specific.

The common topics include intercultural communication and an understanding of language as a system and how language is learnt by adults. It is of the utmost importance to ensure that the manner and depth of presentation varies according to the background and needs of the participants.

The specific topics should deal with teaching methodology (including team teaching and facilitating self-access), resources and the use of technology.

The provision of seminar/workshop presupposes that a large enough group will attend so that fruitful discussion can be generated. We suggest a minimum of ten. There is no need to set an upper limit of attendance because of the technique of sub-grouping. The total group size will determine the number of leaders or facilitators required. By providing these it has to be remembered that participants can also fulfil this role if properly briefed and supplied with the appropriate material.

It is assumed that, except for trainers, the various types of staff will be willing and able to attend seminar/workshops outside working hours. There should be a small fee for materials and refreshments charged to the employing organisation. The expectation that staff acting in a professional or para-professional capacity paid or unpaid, should devote part of their leisure time to upgrading their skills is not an unreasonable one. The knowledge gained should make it easier to carry out the requirements of the work and should offer continuing personal enrichment. Volunteers are a case in point.

Trainers are a different category of tutors. Traditionally job training is part of their work skills but not literacy tuition. Expectations are now changing so that skill auditing takes account of language skills and the transmission of these skills. In other words language tutoring in the workplace will be part of award restructuring. In that way the cost will be met by the employer. Here distinction

has to be made between big enterprises, the 'majors', and small firms. The former will probably be able to in-service its supervisors at the workplace and fund the development of the necessary resources. The teaching materials to be used by trainers are of paramount importance. The methodology to be adopted will vary according to skill and language levels of the prospective students. This needs researching, particularly in the way of incorporating a bilingual approach.

Small firms which cannot form a viable seminar/workshop group might be able to pool their trainers for this purpose or rely on a combination of self-access or distance education learning and face-to-face tutorial support given at regular intervals. The latter might be the preferred option because of the fear of business competition and of employee poaching. It also obviates the need to find a suitable time and venue for workers scattered across small businesses.

Two points need to be stressed here in connection with self-access and distance learning. First, these learning/teaching strategies cannot replace tutors because they do not offer interpersonal interactive learning. To be an active participant in the learning situation is particularly important in language learning.

Second, because in this learning mode the learner cannot immediately check his or her understanding and is probably not familiar with language learning strategies the quality of the teaching materials is of the greatest importance. Because individualised materials are involved, whether in print or in audio-visual form, it is possible to introduce a bilingual approach. This should be particularly effective with the pre-literates and with those who are highly literate in their first language. In the case of the former the new learning can be contextualised much more easily and unambiguously with the help of the learners' mother tongue. In the case of the latter much time can be saved in accurately identifying concepts the learner already has.

To sum up, the important ingredients for in-servicing unqualified staff are sets of sequenced seminar/workshops which are linked by 'homework' tasks. This should result in subsequent networking, and the high quality of resources, ranging from print to the electronic media, made available to participants, together with pertinent clearly formulated background information. It is essential that tutors understand the rationale for the teaching strategies they are expected to adopt.

15. Certification

The need for qualifications recognition and the economic pressures demanding greater accountability have placed accredited certification in the limelight. At one end of the certification spectrum, there are the NESB overseas professionals or students preparing for the professions who need to prove that their English language skills are adequate to meet the demands of their future studies or work. At the other end of the spectrum are the NESB individuals who wish or are required to demonstrate a level of English language mastery deemed adequate to meet the normal

demands of daily life and work in Australia. There is no precedence for examining such groups in Victoria if they are following programs outside the conventional education system with its accredited certification in place. NSW, for example, already has a Certificate of Basic Adult Education (CABE) for adults without any certification.

NESB individuals enrolled in the conventional education system, such as systemic schools, TAFE and tertiary institutions are looked after by these with regard to certification. In some instances special arrangements are made for them. For example the new VCE English has an ESL version. The Ministry of Education through its Statewide Multicultural Education Co-ordination Unit has already prepared a VCE Resources Collection (1990) for English, Australian Studies and Mathematics to help in designing curricula and preparing NESB students for the VCE Common Assessment tasks (CATS).

We are not going to comment on the already developed certification system. Our discussion will focus on the certificates which are in the process of development and of particular interest to NESB women, namely the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) for professionals and the Adult Basic Education Certificate (ABEC) for those without some form of certification. In other words, we are looking on the certification provision for those with a high and those with a low educational background.

15.1 International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

Australian Universities and Colleges together with the British Council and the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate are developing an international English testing system to cater for the certification needs of pre-and post-graduate NESB professionals. The test design is as follows. There are three versions which cater for the three major areas of study, namely, the Humanities and Social Sciences, Life Sciences (e.g, Medicine and Zoology) and the Physical Sciences. Each version has an occupational and a general English section. The tests are centrally set. Profile band descriptors at nine levels are provided for each question of the test. This is in keeping with current trends in examining. An important aspect of the preparation of such tests is the development of criteria associated with the band descriptors.

The fact that the test is centrally set should not affect the curriculum adversely as the examination caters for a fairly well defined group of candidates and discipline areas. Using broad banding in grading candidates' language skills allows sufficient flexibility in assessment. (For further details see the IELTS and the NLIA publicity brochures.)

15.2 Adult Basic Education Certificate (ABEC)

The proposed ABEC is being developed by DFE partly in response to changes in the workplace through award restructuring. The situation in connection with award restructuring, work and English language skills is as follows.

Award restructuring brings with it a skills structure where higher level skills are to be rewarded. Before that can happen skills have to be recognised and certified. The Skills Formation Council has undertaken a study of what is involved in these tasks. In their view:

> vocations range from factory operative to engineer, from shop assistant to medical practitioner.

The training they refer to:

> is provided by universities and colleges of advanced education, by TAFE colleges, by community organisations and private firms selling training, in the workplace and elsewhere, as well as the more easily observed learning which goes on in formal courses and programs.

They elaborate on recognition as follows:

> vocational training and learning includes setting standards for attainment or competence, assessing and recording what individuals know and can do, assessing or evaluating these assessments and records (usually certificates of one kind or another), assessing and evaluating courses, programs, and the organisations which provide them and using formal records of attainment. Recognition, in other words, what is usually termed standard setting, assessment, certification, licensing, registration, accreditation, credit transfer, together with aspects of selection for employment and promotion, and for access to education and training.
>
> (1990: ix)

The present system is criticised on various grounds:

1. Assessment is available only to those who have taken formal courses. This excludes a good deal of learning in the ordinary course of working, and outside the workplace.

2. There is an increasing need for assessment of 'higher order' skills, but a great shortage of expertise to do it.

3. Many vocational courses are not recognised - and their graduates therefore go without proper recognition - simply because their courses are provided outside the established (public) system.

4. There is almost no adequate articulation of courses and qualifications. This is mainly a weakness in the public education system, which is marked by both horizontal and vertical barriers to the recognition of qualifications (and especially vocational qualifications).

5. Arrangements for recognition of skills and qualifications gained overseas are slow and ineffective. They do not actively encourage people to seek recognition, they produce high failure rates (especially through discriminatory language tests), and they are not linked to bridging courses or to advise and support services.

(1990: xii)

In our experience there is wide agreement in the field, namely among employers, unions, providers and other interested parties with the report's suggestions of what is needed.

The first step is skill auditing, namely the identification of competencies which include work, social and language related knowledge. Certification should be based on the demonstration of such knowledge/competency.

Certification should be available on demand. It should be portable, in other words recognised within the same industry, across groups of industries and nationally. It should be flexible, that is if teaching modules are included in the skills acquisition procedure they should not be rigidly prescribed in number or sequence. It should be possible for any provider to teach these modules. Community based providers and the private sector have a role to play here in giving people a start by offering less formal initial tuition and in this way building the adult learners' confidence.

Irrespective how the necessary work and language competency was gained, the certificate should be delivered by a designated body on the basis of evidence supplied. The types of evidence deemed acceptable should be in line with innovative approaches to formal or informal recognition. These could include task books and log books, records of training and employment, self-evaluation, observer evaluation, flexible attendance at courses following a self-spaced mode of learning. In short what should be emphasised is what the individual knows and not how this knowledge has been gained.

The available documentation on work and language competencies shows what an enormous task skill auditing is. For an example rich in detail see, ***English on the Job Public Health Sector Research Project*** prepared by AMES EWP Project Group.

The work done by TCF is of particular interest because it deals separately with common and industry specific competencies. For each type of competence, it specifies the level, the competence required by that level and comments on standards and conditions, in other words gives criteria.

One common competency identified is communications which includes spoken and written communication. Interestingly literacy is required as from skill level one. (See TCF: Common Competencies. Communications draft document, 1990).

It is important to note that the TCF specifies 11 levels for operators. At level 5, bilingual skills are recognised (Translate and interpret for other workers). These skills are automatically required and recognised at subsequent higher levels.

Harmonising work skill and language proficiency levels is one consideration in designing the ABEC, another is the need to take the requirements of those not in employment into account. These can be classified into two groups: those with interest in further education and those who are seeking certification for purely personal reasons. Such wide ranging requirements can only be met by providing a broad curriculum framework. In the formulation of these the work done by the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR) and VCAB in the English and LOTE VCE fields of study should prove helpful.

The requirement of a comparable standard at year 10 level and the provision of a pathway to further education can be met by providing appropriate criteria for profile band descriptors.

The advantages of literacy profiling include:

* flexibility as it offers a range of assessment possibilities;
* judgment of attainment more in the hands of teachers on the ground;
* provision of benchmarks against which observations can be placed;
* space to determine what the students need;
* opportunity to choose focus of the course;
* opportunity to select materials which are appropriate to the interests of the learners;
* provision of literacy activities which relate to the real world activities of the learners;
* emphasis on activities completed; and
* provision for a broad band of skills thus avoidance of limiting development.

The above list is not comprehensive as it is only intended to show that the use of broadbanding makes it possible to assess student performance without centrally set tests.

In sum, the significant difference between IELTS and ABEC is not so much that they are concerned with very different educational levels but that the former serves a fairly well defined clientele and discipline area whereas the candidates for the latter are extremely heterogeneous with a wide range of knowledge, skills and purposes for study.

15.3 Benefits and disadvantages of the ABEC

In view of the impending advent of the ABEC, it might be profitable to reflect on its likely benefits and disadvantages so that safeguards can be put into place to prevent the latter. Envisaged benefits include:

1. Recognition of knowledge and skills and consequent better job security/chances of promotion/wage increase;

2. The opening up of career paths by means of further education;

3. Greater consistency in course planning;

4. More attention paid to efficiencies in course delivery;

5. Greater accountability/attention to course evaluation; and

6. Clearer articulation of progression across courses.

Envisaged disadvantages include:

1. Certification used to discriminate against certain groups;

2. Undue narrowing of course content in preparation for the certificate;

3. Adverse effect on class atmosphere because of pressure in preparing for the certificate;

4. Making the certificate a condition of employment irrespective of the nature of the work;

5. Creating an unemployable underclass of those without a certificate;

6. Keeping women away from classes because they have no employment or further study ambitions.

Clearly not all benefits and disadvantages are foreseeable at this point. There are also a number of problems that need to be solved. For example, the body delivering the certificate has to be identified and the appropriate budget allocation made for the certification. Another problem is the accreditation of private institutions which are now encouraged to enter the literacy teaching field by the Commonwealth (see Green Paper, 1990a:19). The training of instructors and supervisors in the workplace for assessment purposes must also be organised and maintained. The role of teacher aides, volunteer tutors and bilingual workers must be clarified. We expect that once the certificate is implemented other concerns may arise.

We do not doubt that certification will benefit some NESB women. For example, it is expected that the IELTS will go some way in solving the problem of admitting NESB women to the professions.

Much will depend on the preparatory courses TAFE and tertiary institutions will offer. For example, Footscray TAFE already has such a course for doctors and dentists. The ABEC should serve the core female labour force well in recognising their abilities. On the other hand, the disadvantaged groups of NESB women we have identified might find it even more difficult to access courses if they are tied to accredited certification. This is cogent reason for implementing our recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Reflections

Investigating the language needs of NESB women has been a rewarding task because of the expertise, openness and enthusiasm of all the persons we have contacted. They went out of their way to support the project and we are most grateful for their help. We were particularly fortunate in being able to rely on our networks of ex-students and colleagues many of whom are active in adult education. These contacts not only gave use easy entry to classes but also greatly facilitated access to a number of unpublished papers which often provided valuable insights.

In writing this report, our problem was not lack of information but the very opposite. We were overwhelmed not only by the complexity of the adult education field in all its aspects and the volume of activity but also by its dynamic nature and the rapidly occurring changes in this area. Consequently, many of the gaps in the delivery of literacy tuition we had originally identified have been filled in the meantime. Our task therefore has been to show how NESB women can best benefit from the various sound innovative practices we have identified. The wide-ranging aspects of the field have stimulated us to suggest solutions in Chapters 4 and 5 which consciously build on the life experiences of mature NESB women. The next step is to devise **evaluation** guidelines which constitute an appropriate response to the changing literacy tuition scenario for NESB women.

Because literacy, according to its current definition, is such a broad topic we have concentrated on its linguistic aspect while acknowledging the importance of numeracy. This is in keeping with Baynham's argument (member of the CATALPA team, University of Technology Sydney) in his response to our recommendations that 'numeracy is an autonomous and specific subject area with significant areas of cross-over with literacy'. Baynham adds that in 1991 a number of NSW projects will address the positioning of the literacy and numeracy fields vis a vis each other.

One of the striking features of our data is the consensus of opinion of those we have consulted and listened to in conferences/seminars including employers and trade union representatives. We do not claim, however, that these views are necessarily generalisable to others. Nevertheless, they indicate trends and point to issues which require further investigation.

Non-pedagogical Issues

Among the non-pedagogical issues which were constantly raised by personnel was the need for child care and transport. What was less adequately discussed was the importance of ethno-specific or culturally appropriate child-care provision. The NESB women themselves in our sample attached less importance to these. Obviously if such services are prerequisites for access to classes then women needing them would not have been strongly represented in our survey as the NESB women respondents were recruited from literacy classes. Regretfully, the voice of non-participants is largely absent from this report. Much of the information we have about them has been gathered indirectly through personnel and through reports. This highlights the plight of isolation which mostly affects young mothers, outworkers, rural women and the elderly. A group, hardly ever mentioned in its own right and not strongly represented in our data but nevertheless deserving attention, are the single women. These women often lack status and autonomy. We take it for granted that DFE is aware of these non-pedagogical issues, accordingly they are not explicitly included in our recommendations.

Comments on Recommendations

An overview of the general field of literacy provision showed that there are informed initiatives being taken in most areas. Not all of these initiatives, however, include NESB women. Most of our recommendations therefore do not introduce entirely new ideas. The intention is to reinforce or extend to NESB women, where this is not the case, the existing sound arrangements and the newly piloted successful initiatives. We stress that our recommendations are grounded in actual practice including the bilingual approach and the use of new technologies. We attached great importance to these two issues and hope that in a field where personnel in leadership roles are well informed and creative in thinking these will now receive greater attention.

Our recommendations are presented in four sections. They are grouped according to the degree to which DFE can take responsibility for implementing them.

i) DFE can take direct action with respect to
RECOMMENDATIONS 1-9 which concern the development of strategies in key areas to make the literacy program for NESB women more equitable and effective.

ii) DFE can take the initiative with respect to
RECOMMENDATION 10-12 which are designed to ensure that NESB women can access appropriate courses and can obtain skill recognition/accredited certification.

iii) DFE can investigate
RECOMMENDATIONS 13-14 which concern the various ways literacy tuition can be extended to reach potential NESB women learners whose present participation rate is low.

iv) DFE can draw attention to
RECOMMENDATIONS 15-16 which concern the need for detail and clarity when communicating with NESB women in print.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Division of Further Education, Victoria

Take action to:

1. target a percentage of DFE funding for the provision of literacy programs for NESB women;

2. within this percentage target funds specifically for bilingual learning;

3. provide resources for the use of the dominant community languages in Victoria in any community awareness and information strategy in the form of brochures and other non-print means of communicating with NESB adult literacy learners;

4. develop state-wide a coherent professional development strategy for full-time and part-time teachers, teacher aides, untrained literacy workers, bilingual workers, home tutors and other volunteers to promote good practice in ESL literacy teaching;

5. develop the mechanisms for generating appropriate literacy materials, particularly for NESB women, which are culturally appropriate;

6. work with other government bodies and other agencies servicing NESB women such as CES and Workcare to develop a comprehensive course referral and multilingual information service. Each DFE region should develop a strategy for identifying and liaising with relevant government agencies;

7. liaise with State Training Board to ensure that resources are provided for literacy pilot programs for outworker women;

8. support the inclusion of bilingual ESL and LOTE literacy in the already existing regional and other networking in course planning, teaching methodology and information dissemination; and

9. ensure that the Adult Basic Education Research and Curriculum Forum covers a sufficiently wide range of topics including bilingual education and reaches researchers as well as full-time and part-time staff of mainstream, workplace and ethnic/community-based providers so that the effective implementation of curriculum options can occur.

Promote:

10. the extension of the already existing TAS co-ordinating Committee to include DFE, OSTB, AMES, CAE, the Schools, the Ethnic Affairs Commission and ethnic and other community organisations;

11. outreach referral and counselling services for NESB women. These services should employ appropriately qualified and experienced staff, possibly bilingual in order to create favourable conditions and attitudes for NESB women learners; and

12. ongoing development of approaches to both formal accreditation and credit portability appropriate for further education programs and the recognition of prior learning in these credentialing processes.

Explore:

13. the use of new technology where the knowledge of literacy teaching is combined with new developments in computer controlled technology with a view of deploying such facilities more widely. In particular investigate the ways organisations which have new technological equipment can share their facilities with providers of NESB adult literacy classes; and

14. with other agencies the possibility of providing financial incentives for NESB women, who are outworkers, part-time employed or retrainees to attend literacy classes.

Encourage:

15. all providers to publish a clear description of aims, objectives and selection criteria of adult ESL and LOTE literacy programs and the method of student selection in order for potential students to find a learning pathway; and

16. as a matter of policy the use of plain English in places of employment and Commonwealth and State Government notices, forms and other documents directed at the general public.

Future Research

Today we know a great deal about adult education generally and about literacy basic education in particular (see for example the 'Journal Readings' section of the ***ARIS Bulletin***). We also know a great deal about L2 acquisition by adults and children and bilingual learning by children (see for example the journals ***Language Learning*** and ***Studies in Second Language Acquisition***, the work done under the auspices of The National Languages Institute of Australia (NLIA), by The Language Acquisition Research Centre, The University of Sydney and for an overview of bilingual education Rado, 1989).

More data are needed, however, on the **bilingual literacy approach for adult learners** in most of its aspects.

Our research has uncovered the following areas requiring the attention of applied linguists and teachers preferably working as a research team:

1. Development of literacy teaching strategies for beginners who are not literate in their mother tongue. The choices are:

    a. becoming literate in L1 before attempting literacy in L2;
    b. attempting literacy in L2 without literacy in L1; or
    c. becoming literate in L1 and L2 simultaneously.

2. Investigation of NESB women's perceptions of bilingual literacy:

    a. for general everyday use; and
    b. for vocational/professional purposes.

3. Investigation of the need for gender and ethnospecific classes for NESB women.

4. Investigation of the mode of disseminating information to non-teaching personnel in contact with NESB women.

5. Investigation of the types of literacy tuition NESB women favour, e.g., exclusive focussing on language skills or associated with the acquisition of vocational skills.

6. Development of strategies to set up and support independent study groups.

7. Investigation of the types of leisure reading NESB women favour in English and in their mother tongue.

8. Investigation of the effectiveness of the new technologies particularly in learning by adults in the bilingual mode.

9. Identification or development of a suitable reference book dealing with all aspects of language and published (preferably multilingually) in various versions suitable for learners at different levels of English proficiency.

10. Investigation of the most effective subtitling of films and videos. The choices are:

    a. normal subtitling, i.e., talk in L2, subtitles in L1;
    b. bimodal input, i.e., talk and subtitles in L2; and
    c. reverse subtitling, i.e., talk in L1, subtitles in L2.

11. Investigation of how to provide literacy tuition for NESB rural women.

12. Investigation of the particular needs of single NESB women for literacy tuition.

13. Development of guidelines for:

    a. negotiating with employers;
    b. negotiating with NESB women learners; and
    c. interviewing NESB women workers for English in the Workplace programs.

14. Development of guidelines and a pro-forma for what industry needs to know about providers, courses and accredited certification for English in the Workplace programs.

15. Comparison of the effectiveness of bilingual literacy acquisition for children and adults.

16. Research into the co-ordination of combined systems of delivery in literacy tuition (e.g., combining face-to-face tuition with varieties of distance learning).

The list is not intended to be definitive. Much will depend at the national level on the research outcomes of the projects of national significance under the leadership of Professor Christie, CATALPA and the work of the various NLIA co-ordinated as well as Commonwealth sponsored research, teaching and curriculum centres. At the State level there are various DFE funded projects (see ***ARIS Bulletin***) and other projects supported by other grants (for example by the Ethnic Affairs Commission) which should yield rich data but also pinpoint further areas of research. It is hoped that the need for accurate data is recognised and therefore research will receive ongoing support despite difficult economic conditions.

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APPENDICES

INSTRUMENTS

A Initial Outline of Project.

B Questionnaires: Organisers, Teachers, Students, I am a woman, Employers.

C Schedule for Unstructured Interviews.

D Letter and Survey Sheet for Government Related Organisations.

E Letter and Survey Sheet for Community Organisations.

F Agenda for Meeting with Community Providers.

G Covering Letter, Recommendations and Example of Model for Action, and List of Interviewees for Feedback.

A Initial Outline of Project

RESEARCH PROJECT:

Literacy Needs of NESB Women

Principal Investigators:

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This project is supported by the Division of Further Education, Ministry of Education, Victoria.

Amongst the adult population requiring literacy and basic education strategies women of non-English speaking background (NESB) have been identified as a group with special needs (see for example, the Galbally Report 1978, the Jupp Report 1986, various adult migrant education studies such as English learning needs of isolated women 1986 and English learning needs of migrants with overseas professional qualifications 1986, the Edgar Report, 1988). Within the field of literacy and basic education for this group, our concern is with literacy in first language other than English (LOTE) and English itself. This concern covers many facets related to economic and social development. Because of the complexity of the needs, a variety of strategies will have to be developed and implemented in diverse formal and informal ways and contexts. For example, some women may require literacy courses in L1 prior to extending this skill to English whereas others being already literate in L1 and marginally literate in English need tuition for developing more sophisticated literacy skills. By appropriately targeting skills in L1 and in English, by identifying the range of learners, by providing a wide range of matching courses, we suggest that outcomes would be more effectively and economically achieved. Further, the outcomes are more likely to encompass a wide range of needs such as vocational including initial access to the paid workforce and also change of career, personally enabling women to function autonomously in negotiating everyday life and social including retaining status in the eyes of their children, coping with the consequences of social and geographical mobility and obtaining greater equality of opportunity to participate in the wider society (Access and Equity Plan Report No 4 1988, National Agenda for Women 1988).

The aim of the study is to enhance the opportunities for and access to further education and/or paid employment for women of non-English speaking background (NESB).

The objectives are as follows:

1. To target women of NESB who are:

   (a) literate in their mother tongue (L1) and illiterate in English (L2)

   (b) illiterate in L1 and L2

2. To obtain information on

   - their personal and educational history
   - current situation
   - future aspirations for both oral and written communication competence in both L1 and L2
   - general and vocational education
   - intercultural communication and employment.

3. To establish their adult literacy and basic education (ALBE) needs.

4. To set guidelines for the required diversity of literacy programs to meet their needs.

B Questionnaires

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN

Research Team: Marta Rado, Lois Foster, Eva Burman

Q.I. ORGANIZERS

Background Information

Name: .....

Address: .....

Phone No: .....

Name of Organization/Institution: .....

Address: .....

Phone No: .....

Position in Organization: .....

Date: .....

1. Sex
   - Male 1
   - Female 2

2. Age
   - 21-30 1
   - 31-40 2
   - 41-50 3
   - 51+ 4

3. Country of Birth .....

4. Date of Arrival (if not born in Australia) .....

5. Where did you go to school?
   - (a) primary Aust. 1
     primary o/seas 2
     both 3
   - (b) secondary Aust. 1
     secondary o/seas 2
     both 3
     n/a 4
   - (c) tertiary Aust. 1
     tertiary o/seas 2
     both 3
     n/a 4

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6. What is your highest qualification? .....

7. Where did you obtain your highest qualification?

.....

.....

8. What specific qualification/experience do you have for your present employment?

.....

.....

9. Years of experience in this type of work

1-2	1
3-5	2
6-10	3
11-15	4
16+	5

10. Literate languages other than English (LOTE) known (i.e. ability to read and write)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

11. Non literate LOTE(S) known

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

12. LOTE(S) used in everyday life

often	1
sometimes	2
rarely	3
n/a	4

13. Do you use a LOTE professionally?

often 1
sometimes 2
rarely 3
n/a 4

STUDENTS

14. Total number of students enrolled in your courses

full time .....

male .....

female .....

part time .....

male .....

female .....

15. Which language groups are catered for in your classes?

....

....

....

....

16. Which students are you aiming for in your courses?

.....

.....

.....

17. How ~~do~~ you recruit your students?

.....

.....

(a) Give details .....

.....

.....

.....

18. Are there any groups in the community that you feel are not being reached?

yes 1
no 2

19. Which groups are these?

.....

.....

.....

.....

20. Why aren't they being reached?

.....

.....

.....

.....

21. How could they be reached?

.....

.....

.....

22. Is there any student funding provided?

yes 1
no 2

(a) If yes, give details

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

23. Is any form of bilingual support provided for students?

yes 1
no 2

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(a) If yes, give details

.....

.....

.....

.....

24. Are there any other forms of support you would ideally like to provide for your female students?

.....

.....

.....

.....

25. Do you differentiate between male/female students in your courses?

yes 1
no 2

(a) Give details

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

26. Are there any specific areas where female students' learning needs should be approached in a particular way?

.....

.....

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.....

.....

STAFF

27. Number of teaching staff employed

Full Time:

male .....

female .....

Part Time:

male .....

female .....

28. Languages spoken by staff (LOTE)

....

....

....

29. Are present provisions for teacher development

good	1
very good	2
adequate	3
poor	4
n/a	5

30. Do you have any suggestions for further professional development activities?

yes	1
no	2

(a) If yes, give details

.....

.....

.....

COURSES

31. Courses provided by your institution

Name of Course	Length of Course
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

32. Who is responsible for organizing/developing the courses?

mainly organizers	1
mainly teachers	2
mainly outside agencies	3
mainly students	4
mixed	5

.....

.....

.....

33. How much input do you have in course development?

a lot	1
adequate	2
not enough	3
none	4
n/a	5

.....

.....

.....

34. How are your courses evaluated?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

35. How are your courses funded?

Fed. Govt.	1
State Govt.	1
special grants	1
self	1
borrowed	1
mixture	1
other	1
n/a	1

36. Have any courses been discontinued since 1988?

yes	1
no	2

(a) If yes, name the courses .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

37. Why were they discontinued?

lack of funds	1
govt. regulations	1
lack of interest	1
lack of communic.	1
lack of staff	1
wrong time	1
other	1

38. Do any of your courses have pre requisites?

yes 1
no 2

(a) If yes, give details

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

39. When are your courses run?

a.m. 1
p.m. 2
both 3

.....

.....

40. Do women have problems with the times that courses are available?

(a) If yes, give details

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

41. Are there any child care facilities provided?

(a) If yes, give details

.....

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42. How satisfied are you with the methodology available for your courses?

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.....

43. How satisfied are you with the resource materials available for your courses?

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44. What are the main issues being addressed by your courses?

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.....

ADMINISTRATOR CONCERNS

45. How much autonomy do you have as an administrator?

a lot	1
adequate	2
not enough	3

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN

Research Team: Marta Rado, Lois Foster, Eva Burman

Q.2. TEACHERS

Background Information

Name: .....

Address: .....

Phone No.: .....

Name of Organization/Institution: .....

Address: .....

Phone No.: .....

Position in Organization: .....

Date: .....

1.	Sex	Male	1
		Female	2
2.	Age	20-30	1
		31-40	2
		41-50	3
		51+	4
3.	Country of Birth		
4.	Date of Arrival (if not born in Australia)		
5.	Where were you schooled?	(a) secondary Aust.	1
		secondary o/seas	2
		both	3
		(b) tertiary Aust.	1
		tertiary o/seas	2
		both	3
		n/a	4

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

6. Where did you obtain your teaching qualifications?

.....

.....

.....

7. What is your highest qualification?

.....

.....

.....

8. What specific qualifications/experience do you have for your present employment?

.....

.....

.....

9. How many years of experience do you have in this type of work?

1-2	1
3-5	1
6-10	1
11-15	1
16+	1

10. Literate languages other than English (LOTE) known (i.e. ability to read & write)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

11. Non literate LOTE(S) known

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

12. LOTE(S) used in everyday life -

often	1
sometimes	2
rarely	3
n/a	4

13. Do you use a LOTE professionally?

often	1
sometimes	2
rarely	3
n/a	4

STUDENTS

14. Total number of students enrolled in your courses

Male:

full time .....

part time .....

Female:

full time .....

part time .....

15. Which language groups are catered for in your classrooms?

....

....

....

....

....

16. Are there any groups in the community that you feel are not being reached?

yes 1
no 2

17. Which groups are these?

.....

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18. Why aren't they being reached?

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.....

19. How could they be reached?

.....

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.....

20. Do you receive enough information about your students so that you can work effectively with them?

yes 1
no 2

(a) If not, what else would you like to know?

.....

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.....

21. If there any bilingual support provided for students?

yes 1
no 2

(a) If yes, what sort of support?

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.....

.....

22. Are there any other forms of support that you feel should be provided for women?

.....

.....

.....

.....

23. Does it matter if there are male and female students together in the same class?

yes 1
no 2

(a) If it does, in what way?

.....

.....

.....

.....

24. Are there any specific areas where female students' learning needs should be approached in a particular way?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

25. Do you differentiate between male and female students in your courses?

yes 1
no 2

(a) If yes, give details

.....

.....

.....

COURSES

26. Courses that you are currently teaching

Name of Course	Length of Course
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

27. What are the main foci of the courses that you are currently teaching?

.....

.....

.....

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.....

.....

28. How much input do you have in course development?

a lot	1
adequate	2
not much	3

.....

.....

29. Do the students have any input?

yes	1
no	2

(a) If yes, give details

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30. How are your courses evaluated?

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31. When are your courses held?

a.m. 1
p.m. 2
both 3

32. Do women have problems with the times that courses are available?

yes 1
no 2

(a) If yes, give details

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33. If course books are used, how suitable are they?

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(a) If course books are unsuitable, why?

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34. What kinds of teaching aids do you use?

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35. How satisfied are you with the methodology in your area?

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36. How satisfied are you with the resource materials available in your area?

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37. How would you describe the facilities provided?

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38. If facilities are inadequate, do you have any suggestions for improvements?

.....

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.....

TEACHER CONCERNS

39. How much autonomy do you have as a teacher?

a lot	1
adequate	2
not enough	3

(a) Give details

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

40. Are present provisions for teacher development

very good	1
good	2
adequate	3
poor	4
n/a	5

(a) Give details

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

41. Do you have any suggestions for further professional development?

yes	1
no	2

(a) If yes, give details

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

42. As a teacher, what are the main problems you face?

facilities	1
equipment	1
lack of time	1
lack of support	1
other	1

(a) Give details

.....

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43. Are there any issues or problems that we haven't mentioned that we should pay attention to?

.....

.....

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.....

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN

Research Team: Marta Rado, Lois Foster, Eva Burman

Q.3. STUDENTS

Background Information

Name: .....

Address: .....

Phone No: .....

Name of Organization/Institution: .....

Name of Class: .....

Date:

1. Sex:
   Male 1
   Female 2

2. Age:
   20-30 1
   31-40 2
   41-50 3
   51+ 4

3. Marital Status:
   married 1
   not married 2
   never married 3

4. Number of children: .....

5. Ages of children: .....

6. Country of Birth: .....

7. Date of arrival (if not born in Australia) .....

8. Literate languages other than English known (can read and write)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

9. Non literate languages known (can't read and write)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

10. Languages other than English spoken in everyday life

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

11. Which language do you speak mainly with

husband/partner .....

children .....

other family members .....

friends .....

others .....

12. Where did you go to school?

a)	primary Aust.	1
	primary o/seas	2
	both	3
b)	secondary Aust.	1
	secondary o/seas	2
	both	3
	n/a	4
c)	tertiary Aust.	1
	tertiary o/seas	2
	both	3
	n/a	4

13. How many years of schooling (primary & secondary) have you had in Australia?

..... years

14. At the moment are you

self employed	1
engaged in home duties	1
working full time	1
working part time	1
unemployed	1
a pensioner	1
retired	1

15. If working, what sort of work do you do?

.....

.....

.....

16. If working, which languages are spoken in the workplace?

....

....

....

17. How much English is needed to work there?

a lot	1
some	2
not much	3
none	4

18. Are you given time off to go to English classes?

yes	1
no	2
n/a	3

19. Where did your husband/partner go to school?

a)	primary Aust.	1
	primary o/seas	2
	both	3
b)	secondary Aust.	1
	secondary o/seas	2
	both	3
	n/a	4
c)	tertiary Aust.	1
	tertiary o/seas	2
	both	3
	n/a	4

20. How many years of schooling (primary & secondary) has he had in Australia?

..... years

21. At the moment is your husband/partner

working full time	1
working part time	1
unemployed	1
a pensioner	1
retired	1
deceased	1
n/a	1

22. Is your husband/partner enrolled in a course at the moment?

yes	1
no	2

a) If yes, which course?

.....

.....

COURSE

23. Name of course in which you are currently enrolled

.....

24. Length of course .....

25. Have you done any other course(s) since you have been in Australia?

yes	1
no	2

If yes, give details .....

.....

.....

26. When do you go to classes now?

day	1
night	2
both	3

a) Why do you go at this time? .....

.....

.....

27. Do you have problems with class times?

yes	1
no	2

a) If yes, give details .....

.....

.....

.....

28. Is the course you are currently enrolled in your first preference?

yes	1
no	1

a) If not why did you decide to do it?

.....

.....

.....

29. Is there another course that you would go to if it was held at the same time?

yes	1
no	2

a) Which course?

.....

.....

b) Why?

.....

.....

30. How did you find out about the course you are currently doing?

.....

.....

.....

31. Why did you decide to do this particular course?

.....

.....

.....

32. Did you get any advice about the choice of courses?

.....

.....

.....

a) Where from?

.....

.....

33. Do you think that the fact that you are female affected your course choice?

yes 1
no 2

a) If yes, in what way?

.....

.....

.....

34. Does it matter if there are male and female students together in the class?

yes 1
no 2

a) If it does, in what way?

.....

.....

.....

.....

35. Does it matter if the class teacher is male?

yes 1
no 2

a) If it does, in what way?

.....

.....

.....

.....

36. Are you satisfied with the course so far?

yes	1
no	2

37. If you are satisfied with the course, what are the reasons?

interesting subject	1
relevant material	1
supportive teacher	1
happy with results	1
good work environment	1
support from others	1
close to home	1
right time of day	1
mixed reasons	1

a) Main reason?

.....

.....

.....

38. If you aren't satisfied with the course, what are the reasons?

difficulty with understanding	1
course not interesting	1
unsupportive teacher	1
lack of help from others	1
unhappy with progress	1
wrong time of day	1
far from home	1
bad work environment	1
mixed reasons	1

a) Main reason?

.....

.....

.....

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

39. How much support do you get from your husband/partner when doing this course?

a lot	1
adequate amount	2
not much	3
n/a	4

40. How much support do you get from your children?

a lot	1
adequate amount	2
not much	3
n/a	4

41. Are your studies a source of agreement or disagreement at home?

agreement	1
disagreement	2

42. If you are not receiving enough support how else could they support you?

.....

.....

.....

.....

43. As a female student in this course, do you have any problems?

yes	1
no	2

a) If yes, what are they?

.....

.....

.....

.....

44. Do you have any other problems?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

If yes, what could be done to help you with these problems?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

45. Are there child care facilities available?

yes 1
no 2

46. Do you use the child care facilities?

yes 1
no 2

.....

.....

47. Did the availability of these facilities affect your course choice?

yes 1
no 2

.....

.....

48. Is there any form of bilingual support available to women like yourself?

yes 1
no 2

a) If yes, what sort? .....

.....

.....

.....

49. Is it difficult to work with/get close to students from different ethnic backgrounds?

yes 1
no 2

a) Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

50. Do you prefer to work with students of the same ethnic background as yours?

yes 1
no 2

a) Why? .....

.....

.....

.....

51. In your opinion what are the main areas covered in your course?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

52. What benefits have you gained out of the course to date?

.....

.....

.....

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53. What else do you hope to gain?

.....

.....

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.....

54. Suggested improvements to the course.

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.....

.....

55. Are there any issues or problems that we haven't mentioned that we should pay attention to?

.....

.....

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.....

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

PROJECT: LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN

Principal Investigators

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School of Education
La Trobe University
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Research Assistant

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Q.3 (A) - STUDENT BIOGRAPHY: I AM A WOMAN

MY BACKGROUND (Fill in the gaps and circle 'yes' or 'no')

1. **My name is** .....
2. **I was born in** .....
3. **I am** .....**years old**
4. **I speak** .....
5. **I came to Australia in** .....
6. **My address is** .....
7. **My telephone number is** .....

8. **I am**	1.	single	yes	no
	2.	married	yes	no
	3.	separated	yes	no
	4.	widowed	yes	no
I live with	5.	my de facto husband	yes	no
	6.	relatives	yes	no

9. **I have** ..... **children**
10. **The children are** ..... **years old**

11. In my country, I lived

1.	on a farm	yes	no
2.	in a village	yes	no
3.	in a town or city	yes	no

MY EDUCATION AND WORK

12. I went to school in my country yes no

13. I went to school in my country for ..... years

14. I went to school in Australia yes no

15. I went to school in Australia for ..... years

16. I went to English classes in Australia for ..... years

17. In my country I had a job yes no

18. In my country, my job was .....

19. In Australia now, my job is .....

20. In my country, my husband/de facto went to school yes no

21. He went to school for ..... years

22. In Australia, my husband/de facto went to school yes no

23. In Australia, he went to school for ..... years

24. In my country, he had a job. He was .....

25. In Australia, his first job was .....

26. In Australia, his job now is .....

27. **In Australia, he does <u>not</u> have a job now** yes no

28. **My husband/de facto is learning English** yes no

MY LANGUAGE BACKGROUND

29. **I speak in my language with**

1. my husband/de facto yes no
2. my children yes no
3. my relatives yes no
4. my friends yes no
5. people at work yes no
6. people in shops yes no
7. people in offices eg, Social Security, banks yes no
8. people in ethnic clubs yes no
9. people where I go to pray yes no
10. doctors and nurses yes no

30. **I can read my language**

1. very well yes no
2. well yes no
3. a little yes no
4. not at all yes no

31. **I can write my language**

1. very well yes no
2. well yes no
3. a little yes no
4. not at all yes no

32. My husband/de facto knows English

1. very well	yes	no
2. well	yes	no
3. a little	yes	no
4. not at all	yes	no

33. He wants me to learn English	yes	no
34. My children want me to learn English	yes	no
35. My relatives want me to learn English	yes	no

MY ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS

36. I need to read English for

1.	shopping	yes	no
2.	finding a telephone number	yes	no
3.	looking up a street directory	yes	no
4.	filling in forms	yes	no
5.	reading letters	yes	no
6.	reading a radio or TV guide	yes	no
7.	reading a newspaper	yes	no
8.	reading a magazine	yes	no
9.	reading notices at work	yes	no
10.	looking for a job	yes	no
11.	finding important information	yes	no
12.	other things		

.....

37. I need to write English for

1.	filling in a form	yes	no
2.	leaving a message	yes	no
3.	sending a letter	yes	no
4.	applying for a job	yes	no
5.	getting some information	yes	no
6.	making complaints	yes	no
7.	paying bills by mail	yes	no
8.	replying to an invitation	yes	no
9.	sending a note to my child's school	yes	no
10.	passing on a message	yes	no
11.	planning things	yes	no
12.	remembering what I have learnt	yes	no
13.	remembering what I have done	yes	no
14.	remembering what has happened	yes	no
15.	telling someone what to do	yes	no
16.	other things		

.....

38. I want to learn how to use a computer yes no

39. I am learning how to use a computer yes no

40. I need English so that I can go to classes to help me get

1.	a job	yes	no
2.	a better job	yes	no
3.	better at my job	yes	no

41. I need English so that I don't have to ask for help from

1.	my family	yes	no
2.	my friends	yes	no
3.	people who speak my language	yes	no

MY ENGLISH CLASS

42. My English class is at .....

43. It is

1.	long enough	yes	no
2.	too long	yes	no
3.	too short	yes	no

44. This is my first English class yes no

45. This course is

1.	too easy	yes	no
2.	too difficult	yes	no
3.	just right	yes	no

46. I go to class

1.	in the morning	yes	no
2.	in the afternoon	yes	no
3.	in the evening	yes	no

47. This is a good time for me to go to class yes no

48. I want to do another course after this one yes no

248. It is better for me to learn in a women's class yes no

50. It is better for me to learn in a class with students who speak my language — yes no

51. It is better for me to have a teacher who speaks my language — yes no

52. It is better for me if the teacher is a woman — yes no

53. It is alright if the teacher is a man — yes no

54. It makes no difference if the teacher is a man or a woman — yes no

55. My problems in coming to class are

1. transport difficulties — yes no
2. child care — yes no
3. my health problems — yes no
4. sick children — yes no
5. house work — yes no
6. family problems — yes no
7. my job — yes no
8. feeling depressed — yes no
9. other things .....

.....

56. I have difficulty in

1. remembering new words — yes no
2. pronunciation — yes no
3. spelling — yes no
4. writing sentences — yes no
5. where to put the words in sentences — yes no
6. using the present and past tense of verbs — yes no
7. hand writing — yes no
8. other things .....

.....

57. I have difficulty in

1.	how people think in Australia	yes	no
2.	how to prepare for a job	yes	no
3.	what is happening in the world	yes	no
4.	other things		

.....

58. My English class is important because

1.	learning English makes me feel better	yes	no
2.	I need other migrant women	yes	no
3.	The women in the class help me	yes	no

59. I think other migrant women want

.....

.....

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.....

.....

Thank you for helping us.

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

PROJECT: LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN

Principal Investigators

Dr M. Rado Tel. 528 6245 (all hours)
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Address

School of Education
La Trobe University
BUNDOORA VIC 3083

Research Assistant

Ms E. Burman Tel. 479 2517 (bus. hours)
or 479 2291

Q.5. EMPLOYERS

Background Information

Name of Organization: .....

Type of Organization: .....

Address: .....

Phone No: .....

Name of Interviewee: .....

Position in Organization: .....

Sex of Interviewee: Male 1

Female 2

Date: .....

1. Size of workforce: .....
2. Number of males: .....
3. Number of females: .....
4. Ethnic groups represented in female workforce:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. Types of jobs done by women:

(A) **Blue collar**	(B) **White collar**
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

Provision for Further Education in English

6. What sort of educational provisions do you make for your staff?
Are any of these off the premises? If yes, tick the appropriate box.

.....

.....

.....

.....

(A) **Blue collar**	(B) **White collar**
(i) upgrading English literacy	(i) upgrading English literacy
(ii) specific skill/job training	(ii) specific skill job training
(iii) general education	(iii) general education
(iv) social/cultural understanding	(iv) social/cultural understanding
(v) other	(v) other

7. How is time release arranged for classes/courses?

.....

.....

.....

8. Why does your organization support classes/courses?

.....

.....

.....

9. How do you choose who is to provide classes, eg, TAFE, AMES?

(A) **Blue collar** (B) **White collar**

.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

10. How are the workers selected for classes/courses?

(A) **Blue Collar** (B) **White Collar**

.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

11. Can the workers attend more than one class/course in succession? If yes, for how long?

(A) **Blue Collar**	(B) **White Collar**
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

12. Should there be recognition for successful completion of classes/courses, eg, certificates?

(A) **Blue Collar**	(C) **White Collar**
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

13. Do you have a tripartite advisory committee consisting of management, the providers and respective unions to oversee the classes/courses?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

224.....

14. Is turnover in the workplace a problem for holding classes? If yes, do you have any ideas on its solution?

.....

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.....

.....

.....

15. Are there any other reasons that make it difficult to form classes?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

16. How will award restructuring change the situation?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

17. Is the organization prepared to finance classes/courses in the future?

.....

.....

.....

18. Are there any other ways the organization can encourage further classes/courses for the workers?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Provision for Bilingual Education

19. Are languages other than English used on the job? How? (eg, notices, oral instructions.)

.....

.....

.....

.....

20. If languages other than English are not being used currently, could they be of value? How?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

21. Where and how do you think it is effective to use the worker's mother tongue to facilitate learning? Tick the appropriate box.

(A) **Blue collar**

(i) in English classes

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(ii) in skill-based training?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(B) **White collar**

(i) in English classes

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(ii) in skill-based training?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(A) **Blue collar** (cont'd)

(iii) in general education

.....

.....

.....

.....

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.....

.....

(iv) in social/cultural understanding

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(v) other

.....

.....

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.....

(B) **White collar** (cont'd)

(iii) in general education

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(iv) in social/cultural understanding

.....

.....

.....

.....

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.....

(v) other

.....

.....

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.....

.....

22. Do you favour the employment of bilingual workers? At what level? How?

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Open-ended Comment

23. Are there any other comments you would like to make?

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.....

C Schedule for Unstructured Interviews

241

NESB WOMEN LITERACY PROJECT

Points for senior staff interviews:

1. Position
2. Qualifications
3. Experience
4. Nature of provider
5. Other similar providers, networks
6. Other different providers, networks
7. Possible other providers
8. Nature of clientele (needs, expectations)
9. Method of student enrolment
10. Type of programs
11. Organisation of programs
12. Staffing
13. Methodology, focus of courses
14. Resources
15. Method of sampling
16. Country women
17. Access to women
18. Access to classes: observe and group interview
19. Distance learning
20. What improvements needed
21. What should get priority
22. What are the most pressing issues
23. Federal and state responsibilities
24. Local government, community responsibilities
25. In what way are women's needs different
26. Useful references, course material
27. Testing procedures, instruments, purpose
28. Access to employers
29. Staff development
30. Any other observations

D Letter and Survey Sheet for Government Related Organisations

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
BUNDOORA VIC 3083

Dear

Your name was given to us in the course of our study on the Literacy Needs of NESB Women. A brief overview of the project is included with this letter.

We feel that you could provide valuable input to the research. Would you complete the enclosed preliminary questionnaire and return it as soon as possible in the stamped, addressed envelope. If you are willing to receive a follow-up phone call, could you indicate that on your questionnaire.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Eva Burman Lois Foster Marta Rado
La Trobe University

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN

Research Team: Marta Rado, Lois Foster, Eva Burman

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name:

2. Organisation:

3. Phone:

4. Position in Organisation:

5. What are the literacy needs of the NESB women with whom your organisation has contact? (Refer to English and ethnic language).

6. Do they have any problems in having these needs met? (If yes, briefly describe)

7. Does your organisation help to overcome these problems? (If yes, indicate how)

8. How else can the literacy needs of NESB women be met?

Return the questionnaire in the envelope provided and indicate if you are willing to receive a follow-up phone call.

Thank you for your help.

E Letter and Survey Sheet for Community Organisations

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
BUNDOORA VIC 3083

Dear

We are engaged in a research study on the Literacy Needs of Non-English Speaking Women (NESB). Included with this letter is a brief overview of the Project.

We feel that your organisation could have a valuable input into the research. If you are willing to help us, would you complete the enclosed brief questionnaire and return it as soon as possible in the stamped, addressed envelope.

If you have any questions, please phone Eva on 479 2517. Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Eva Burman
La Trobe University

Lois Foster

Marta Rado

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN

Research Team: Marta Rado, Lois Foster, Eva Burman

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name:

2. Organisation:

3. Phone No.:

4. Position in Organisation:

5. What are the literacy needs of the women who belong to your organisation? (Refer to English and ethnic language needs)

6. Do the women have any problems in having these needs met? (If so, briefly describe them)

7. Is you organisation able to help? (If yes, briefly describe how)

8. Do you have any other suggestions on how these women could be helped? (If yes, briefly describe)

If you are willing to receive a follow-up phone call, would you indicate. Please return the questionnaire in the enveloped provided.

Thank you for your help.

F Agenda for Meeting with Community Providers

LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN PROJECT MEETING

CENTRAL METROPOLITAN REGION OF FURTHER EDUCATION

13 SEPTEMBER 1990

CONVENED BY MARTA RADO AND LIZ JONES

AGENDA

The role of Migrant Resource Centres

What is actually done?
What should be done?

The role of Ethnic Associations

What is actually done?
What should be done?

Who should get preference for literacy tuition?

When, where and by whom should literacy tuition for NESB women be provided?

Who should be represented on relevant committees?

What is the role of bilingual support in training NESB women?

What is the role of bilingual teaching in training NESB women?

What is the role of accreditation?

What is the role of technology?

Any other concerns

G Covering Letter, Draft Recommendations and Example of Model for Action and List of Interviewees for Feedback

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
BUNDOORA VIC 3083

30 October 1990

Dear

The project Literacy Needs of NESB Women in which you have played an important part is drawing to a close. We are now assembling our report and developing recommendations. This process will be greatly enhanced if you can provide us with some feedback. It is our firm belief that our research procedures must take into account fully the expertise of our many informants working in this field.

What are we asking of you? Enclosed is a brief summary of our preliminary recommendations.

1. We would like you to examine the recommendations and note any comments you wish to make. Our research assistant Ruth Arber will phone you about a week after the receipt of this letter and ask you for your comments. We hope this will involve you in less labour than sending us your reactions to the recommendations in writing.

2. We think that you may be able to suggest recommendations which are not included presently in our list. You can write any additional recommendations on the form provided and return it as soon as possible via the stamped, addressed envelope included with this letter. Please feel free also to add any other remarks about the issues which have been the focus of this research project.

Our sincere thanks again for all your assistance with the project.

Yours sincerely,

Marta Rado and Lois Foster

LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
(Circulated for feedback)

It is recommended that the Division of Further Education, Victoria:

1. Extend the existing formal co-operation between TAFE, AMES and the Schools (TAS) to CAE and ethnic and other community organisations

2. Set up a mechanism for the organisation of seminar/workshops for staff in different categories to ensure the effective implementation of policy options

3. Recruit women more vigorously for literacy tuition/learning fully acknowledging their basic rights and the principle of social justice

4. Support measures conducive to creating favourable learning conditions and attitudes such as providing educational and psychological counselling

5. Subsidise female literacy learners who require financial support

6. Support networking in course planning, teaching methodology, including bilingual education and information dissemination

7. Encourage the articulation of learning modules into clearly defined pathways to satisfy where relevant women's aspirations

8. Extend the notion of literacy or oracy and numeracy

9. Promote the development of intercultural communication skills as a component of a literacy teaching module

10. Exploit the uses of technology including self access and individual learning

11. Establish language units including mobile facilities (appropriately fitted caravans or buses) to provide greater outreach

12. Actively develop the mechanisms for generating appropriate literacy materials

13. Support the development of a variety of approaches to accreditation/certification

14. Sponsor the restructuring of teacher development to include professional full-time and part-time teachers, teacher aides and volunteers

15. Monitor the literacy learning provisions under award restructuring in the diverse workplaces including the special case of outworker women

16. Liaise with government bodies and other agencies servicing NESB women such as CES and Workcare

17. Encourage the use of plain English in places of employment

18. Promote the recognition of bilingual skills in employment

19. Further develop and extend the range of models for action this report has generated on the basis of a set of underlying assumptions and prerequisites

EXAMPLE OF MODEL FOR ACTION

LITERACY CURRICULUM MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

The successful delivery of teaching/learning literacy programs is predicated on the conceptual and linguistic content of courses and the mode of their delivery in terms of human and technological resources. This is an area that is now attracting growing attention at the national level. The Project of National Significance involving the examination of the preparation of teachers for English literacy, both first and second language, awarded to Professor Fran Christie at the Northern Territory University, is one such manifestation. Undoubtedly, NESB women will profit from the outcomes of this project but they are not the focus of it, neither is it directly concerned with curriculum material production. We are therefore not duplicating the Project's work when we propose immediate action by the DFE on the basis of the following model.

Introduction to the proposed **Curriculum Development Model.**

Phase 1. Task: Identification of an agreed theory of literacy learning and teaching by representatives of all relevant parties such as the major providers, but also employers, unions, ethnic and community organisations with and without a focus on women, NESB women students, teachers and other professional and technical specialists who can contribute to such a policy statement.

Action: Organise a workshop for representatives specified above to formulate and reach consensus on the theory of literacy learning/teaching.

Phase 2. Task: Prepare a register of linguists interested in participating in NESB literacy curriculum development.

Action: Advertise in the media and contact various tertiary institutions for expressions of interest. Elicit responses by a brief easy-to-process questionnaire. Draw up the register.

Phase 3. Task: Develop a curriculum framework format such as the VCE LOTE study design.

Action: Members of the Literacy Workshop to nominate members for a Literacy Framework Working Party (LFWP) to develop a flexible framework within three months. Workshop participants to amend, if necessary, and to endorse, the framework. The framework should specify the type of information required and the modular format to be adopted in describing the components of the curriculum. (The work done by VCB in the LOTE area and the National Curriculum Centre English in the Workplace Projects should facilitate this task.) The final curriculum and outlines of its modular component(s) should be published in print but also on computer diskettes so that it is accessible from a computerised data bank. The modules should offer enrichment extensions which make maximum use of telematics. Where appropriate the potential of graphics should be explored.

Phase 4. Task: Call for expressions of interest in curriculum development stipulating the inclusion of a consultant linguist, team work within and across institutions where possible and preliminary seminar/workshop participation.

Action: Invite a select group of curriculum specialists, teacher educators and linguists to plan and conduct a two-day seminar/workshop for prospective curriculum developers; one day to be devoted to reviewing current linguistic concepts and the other day to current approaches to methodology such as activity and genre based teaching strategies. (These should not be considered as alternatives.) Most importantly seminar/workshop participants should be introduced to the various strategies combining teacher mediated face-to-face program delivery with group-centred self-access delivery. The Melbourne College of Textiles Outreach Program is a good model of this type of combination.

Phase 5. Task: Establish criteria for selecting curriculum development proposals. The development of resource materials, such as reading for leisure, should be considered eligible for a grant. It is not sufficient to acquire literacy skills, they have to be maintained partly through reading.

Action: The Literacy Framework Working Party to draw up criteria and specify the format for a particular round of applications and for their finished products. For example, criteria can be categorised according to the target population, content, effective use of technology and so forth. The Working Party could also nominate members of the grant awarding selection committee.

Phase 6. Task: Call for proposals.

Action: Supply prospective applicants with information on criteria and format.

Phase 7. Task: Award grants.

Action: Selection committee to pre-select proposals which best meet the prescribed criteria. The final selection is made after interviewing these applicants. The number of awards will depend on DFE's budget allocation.

Phase 8. Task: Evaluate the completed materials.

Action: Pairs of experts who are specialists in the relevant area to evaluate the quality of the materials according to the established criteria. If there is disagreement a third specialist arbitrates following agreed "discrepancy marking" procedures. If the material is not judged worthy for inclusion in the data base, guidelines are given by the developers how to upgrade them. Some materials may have to be submitted several times before they can be included in the data base.

Phase 9. The best materials that can serve as prototypes get a special mention.

Action: The pairs of experts as a group meet to select the best materials. A function is arranged to show material developers and prospective users excerpts from the exemplary materials.

Phase 10. Task: Arrange follow-up activities to facilitate sharing and dissemination.

Action: Organise seminar/workshops for teachers at varying times and at different venues to report orally and in writing on the materials they use, the method they apply and the results they achieve. Make a collection of the best reports for a data base. The materials could have been published in the past or more recently, commercially or prepared by teachers.

MODEL: GENERATING LITERACY MATERIALS

TASK	ACTION
1a	Identification of learning/teaching theory
1b	Relevant representatives in a workshop formulate the theory
2a	Prepare a register of linguists
2b	Advertise for expressions of interest by linguists
3a	Develop a literacy curriculum framework format
3b	Literacy Curriculum Working Party to develop the framework
4a	Organise preliminary workshops for prospective materials developers
4b	Engage a team of experts and advertise the workshop
5a	Establish criteria for judging proposals
5b	Framework Working Party to identify criteria for applications and completed materials
6a	Call for applications
6b	Supply eligible applicants with relevant information
7a	Award grants
77b	Selection committee to judge applications and interview applicants

8a Evaluate the completed materials

8b Pairs of experts judge eligibility of the materials for a data base

9a The best materials are selected for a special mention

9b A panel of experts selects the best materials. These are viewed at a special ceremony

10a Arrange follow-up activities

10b Teachers meet to share their experiences with teaching materials and methodology generally

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
BUNDOORA VIC 3083

LITERACY NEEDS OF NESB WOMEN: FEEDBACK SHEET

Lois Foster and Marta Rado
La Trobe University

Name of Respondent:.....

Organisation:.....

Address:.....

Position:.....

Telephone.....

Additional Recommendations
(List in numbered points)

Any other comments

Thank you for your contribution - return this sheet via the enclosed stamped, addressed envelope AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

RESPONDENTS CONTACTED FOR FEEDBACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS

Abbatangelo, Jo; Nicholson Neighbourhood House; Co-ordinator

Alderton, Elizabeth; AMES, Mildura

Allender, Susan; AMES, Victoria; Language Programs Co-ordinator

Andrews, Nina; Orbost Adult Literacy Program; Co-ordinator

Balabanski, Peter; Footscray College of TAFE, Language Studies Department Self Access Centre; Co-ordinator

Baynham, Mike; The University of Technology Sydney, Faculty of Adult Education Basic Education; Lecturer

Besley, Helen; State Training Board, Victoria; Project Officer

Blencowe, Jenni, AMES, Victoria, Community Programs; Teacher

Bossio, Bernard; Footscray College of TAFE, Language Studies Department; Teacher

Bottomley, John; Urban Ministry Networking Incorporated

Broadstock, Lorraine; AMES, Victoria; Teacher

Brown, Jeanette; AMES, Victoria, Community Program; Teacher

Burman, Glenda; Multicultural Workplace Communication; Consultant

Burns, Anne, Macquarie University, NCELTR; Lecturer

Burton, Dot; Rockwell International Automotive Body Systems Australia Pty Ltd; Human Resources

Cabrera, Maria; State Library of NSW; Multicultural Services Consultant

Campos, Lillian; Footscray Migrant Resource Centre

Carol, Peter; Yalloum College of TAFE; Regional Officer

Carter, Richard; State Training Board, Victoria, Training Systems and Development; Project Manager

Casey, Sandra; Central Metropolitan Regional Office

Casey, Sue; Footscray College of TAFE, Language Studies Department; Head

Clark, Priscilla; FKA Multicultural Resource Centre; Director

Cleland, Bill; AMES, Victoria, External Programs; Co-ordinator

Dalton, Jeanette; AMES, Victoria; Resource Consultant

Darling, Elizabeth; AMES, Victoria, EWP; Organiser

Davey, Helen; Footscray College of TAFE, Language Studies Department; Teacher

D'Cruz, Vin; La Trobe University, School of Education; Senior Lecturer

Dean, Margret; AMES Victoria; Librarian

Demytko, Jill; AMEC, Enterprise; Educational Counsellor

Dib, Leigh; RMIT, Centre for English Language Teaching Unit; Co-ordinator

Di Pietro, Lorella; Trades Hall Council; Ethnic Liaison Officer

Duggan, Heather; Springvale Neighbourhood House; Co-ordinator

Faine, Miriam; Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE, Migrant Women's Learning Centre; Co-ordinator

Forwood, Ann; Wordwrights Literacy Agency

Forsyth, Rona; AMES, Victoria, EWP; Teacher

Francis, Robyn; CAE, Workplace Basic Education Project; Field Work Co-ordinator

Frawley, Helen; Kensington Women's Group

Fuad, Jama; Prahran Neighbourhood House; Further Education Co-ordinator

Gamar, Marg; Commonwealth Department of Veteran's Affairs, Repatriation General Hospital; Equal Employment Opportunity Co-ordinator

Grant, Rod, AMES, Victoria, Day Program; Principal

Grant, Audrey; La Trobe University, School of Education; Senior Lecturer

Grieg, Esther; AMEC, Enterprise; Principal

Growdzki, Marek; AMEC, Enterprise; Teacher

Haughton, Heather; Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council; Executive Officer

Hawkins, Karen; La Trobe University, Language Centre; Teacher

Henessy, Margo; AMES, Community Program; Organiser

Heywood, Catherine; AMEC, Brunswick; Deputy Principal

Hood, Sue; AMES, NSW Curriculum Support Unit; Literacy Project Officer

Hoong, Judi; North Melbourne Community Club

Howell, Christine; AMES, Victoria; Professional Development Organiser

Howells, Yvonne; AMES, Victoria; Program Development Organiser

Hussey, Barry; RMIT Centre for English Language Teaching Unit; Program Manager

Jackson, Deirdre; RMIT Individual Learning Unit; Teacher

Jones, Liz; DFE Central Metropolitan Regional Office; Regional Manager

Kaufman, Heather; AMEC, Broadmeadows; Teacher/CALL Consultant

Kimberley, Helen; ANLC

Lai, Phoebe; North Richmond Family Care Centre

Liebmann, Jeanette; Migrant Resource Centre, Prahran

Lipa, Lili; AMES, Victoria; Research Officer

Macer, Peter; AMES, Victoria, Materials Development; Organiser

McGlasham, Jane; Melbourne College of Textiles, Career Advancement for Women in TCF; Project Officer

McIntyre, Philip; AMES, Victoria Day Program; Organiser

McKenna, Rosa; Division of Further Education; ALBE Officer

McKeough, Noelle; AMES, Home Tutor Scheme; Organiser

McPhee, Joan; MTIA Metal Trades Industry Association of Australia, Victorian Branch; Manager, Training Programs

Martin, Shirley; AMES, Victoria; Deputy Director

Matheson, Alan; ACTU; Ethnic Liaison Officer

Messimen-Kionidis, Voula; Australian Greek Welfare Society; Director

Moraro, Gail; AMES, Victoria, EWP; Teacher

Nace, Joan; AMES, Victoria, Home Tutor Scheme; Teacher

Neville, Helen; Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission, Division of Policy and Research; Senior Project Officer

Olderton, Libby; Sunrayside College of TAFE, Mildura; Teacher

Ochsenbein, Janine; Yalloum College of TAFE; ESL Co-ordinator

O'Reily, Pam; AMES, Victoria, Professional Development; Acting Organiser

O'Rourke, Jennie; Department of Veteran's Affairs; Training Officer

Parkinson, Cassandra; Australian TCF Industry Training Program; Executive Director

Pasqua, Bruna; DILGEA, Migration Internal

Philippou, Lydia; City of Collingwood; Human Services

Pitt, Christine; Box Hill College of TAFE, Centre for Women's Education; Teacher

Reed, Judy; Wodonga College of TAFE; Head of Basic Education Unit

Reuter, Marina; RMIT English Language Teaching Unit; Teacher

Riddell, Christine; Monash University, Faculty of Education; Lecturer

Robb, Gabrielle; Mildura and District Education Council, Multicultural Women's Association; Member, Commonwealth TAFE Council

Sanguinetti, Jill; Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE, Migrant Women's Learning Centre; Teacher

Scheres, Hermine; University of Technology Sydney, Faculty of Adult Education, Basic Education; Lecturer

Schroeder, Paul; Trades Hall Council; Ethnic Liaison Officer

Scott-Stephens, Jeanette; AMES, Victoria, Home Tutor Scheme; Teacher

Shaw, Neil; Footscray Institute of Technology, Centre for Research and Development; Head

Shapdelar, Dale; RMIT, Centre for English Language Teaching Unit; Teacher

Siauw, Lee Choon; OMA, Victoria

Sidlauskas, Rita; Fitzroy Learning Network; Co-ordinator

Smith, Bruce; DFE Central Metropolitan Regional Office

Spyrou, Helena; Flemington Adult Research Writing; Co-ordinator

Stanfield, Graham; Footscray Institute of Technology, Centre for Research and Development

Stewart, Chris; DFE Northern Metropolitan; Regional ALBE Officer

Stewart, Mary; AMES, Victoria, Community Program; Organiser

Storey, Gay; TFC, Victoria, Industry Training Board; Executive Officer

Strong, Rosemary; AMEC, Broadmeadows; Teacher

Taggart, Dean; AMEC, Brunswick; Principal

Tate, Doris; Affirmative Action in Training; Manager

Tilley, Peter; Footscray College of TAFE, Language Studies Department; Co-ordinator

Tregoning, Margaret; AMES, Victoria, Community Programs; Organiser

Turpin, Tim; Ethnic Affairs Commission; Director of Policy and Research

Vassalo, Mena; AMEC, Broadmeadows; Teacher

Watkins, Lindley; Yalloum College of TAFE; ESL Co-ordinator

Whitelow, Maureen; AMEC, Broadmeadows; Teacher

Zafiropoulos, Mike; DILGEA, Victoria, Ethnic Affairs and Program Co-ordination; Director